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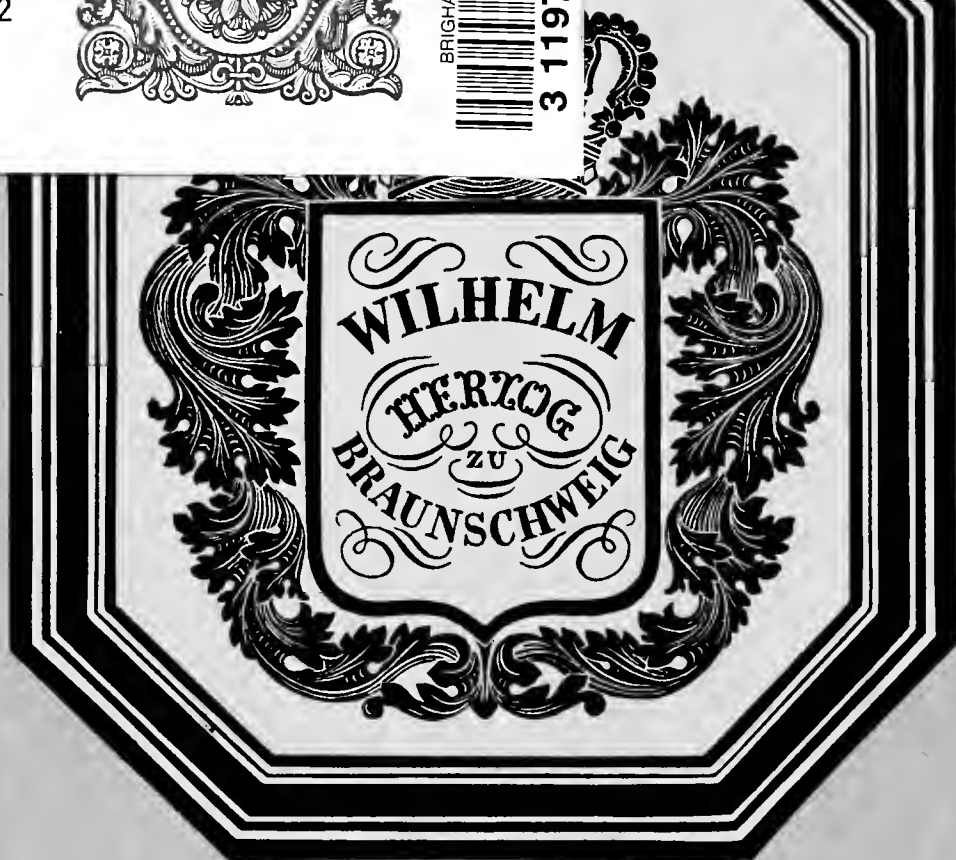
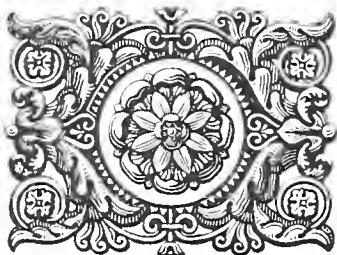
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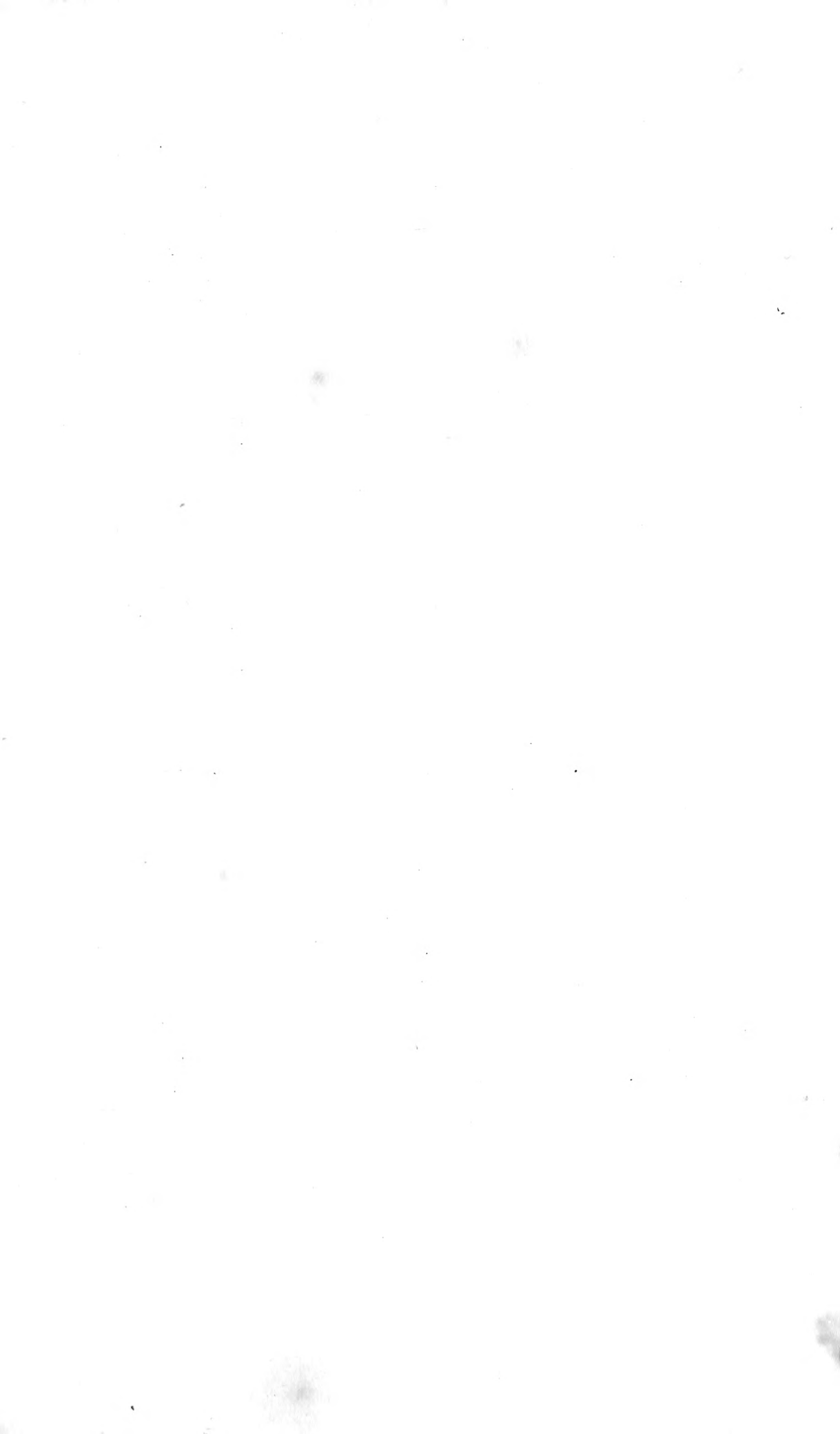
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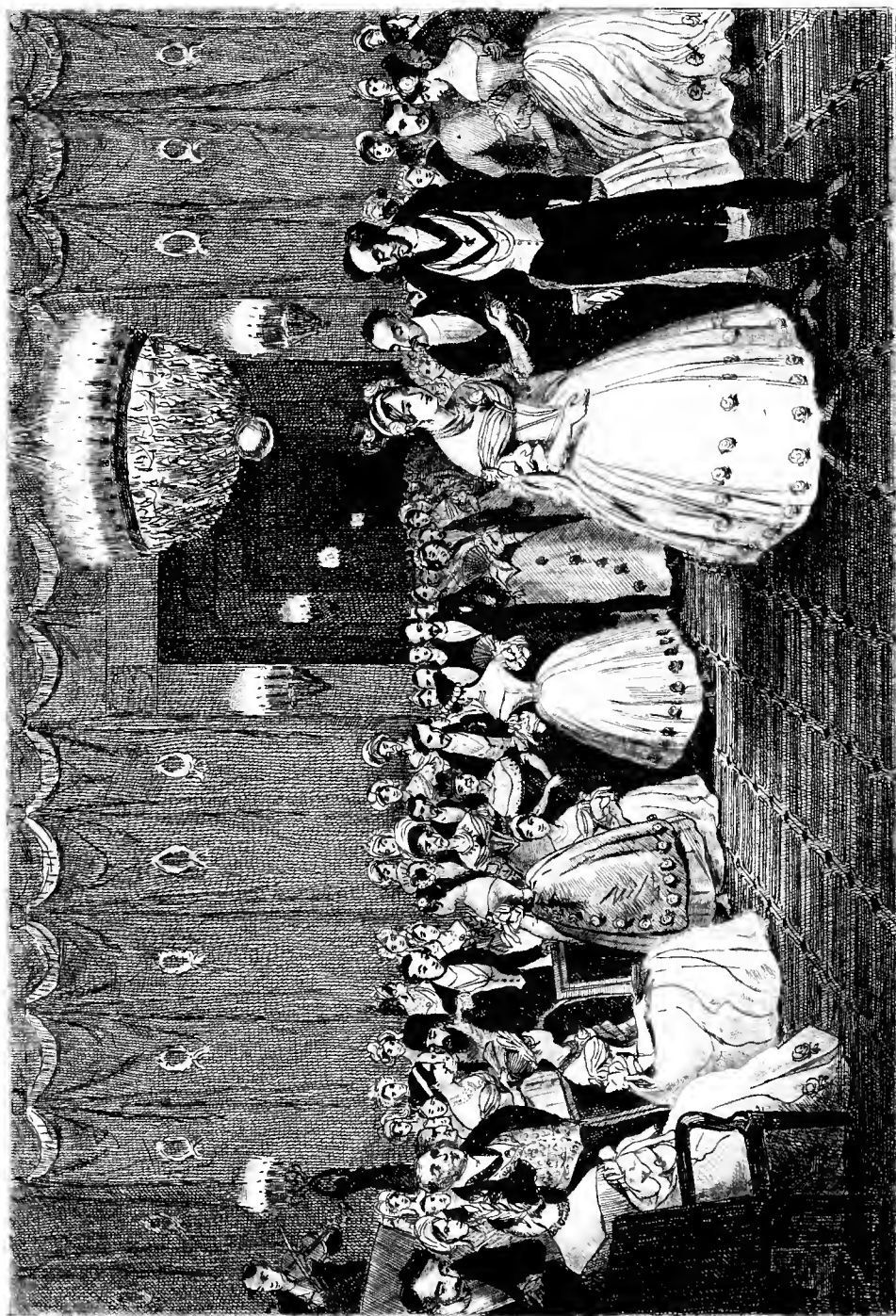


VIENNA
AND THE AUSTRIANS.

VOL. II.

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VIENNA
AND THE AUSTRIANS.

VOL. 2.



THE COURT GOING TO CHAPEL.

LONDON,
RICHARD BENTLEY, NEW BURLINGTON STREET.
Publisher in Ordinary to Her Majesty.
1837.

VIENNA AND THE AUSTRIANS;

WITH

SOME ACCOUNT OF A JOURNEY

THROUGH

SWABIA, BAVARIA, THE TYROL,
AND THE SALZBOURG.

BY FRANCES TROLLOPE,

AUTHOR OF "PARIS AND THE PARISIANS,"—"THE VICAR OF WREXHILL,"

"DOMESTIC MANNERS OF THE AMERICANS," &c.

"Je dirai : J'étais là : telle chose m'avint."—*La Fontaine*.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

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RICHARD BENTLEY, NEW BURLINGTON STREET,

Publisher in Ordinary to Her Majesty.

1838.

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C O N T E N T S

OF

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VOL. II.

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VIENNA AND THE AUSTRIANS.

LETTER XXXII.

The November Fair. — Greeks. — Turks. — Bohemians. — Hungarians. — Jews. — Armenians. — The position of the Jews in the society of Vienna.

Vienna, 4th Nov. 1836.

THE snow still lies upon the ground, and though not very deep, it is quite sufficient to convert the scene beneath our windows into a very perfect winter picture. What greatly increases its animation and interest, is the collection of booths which at present not only fills this fine area of the Hohen Markt, but every other open space within the city of sufficient extent to give scope to the business of a very busy fair.

Twice in every year (during the months of November and of May), a considerable portion of the retail trade of Vienna walks forth from the shops

into the squares and markets, and carries on a brisk traffic there, side by side with the enterprising dealers of Hungary and Bohemia, who on these occasions leave house and home for the space of one month (going and returning not included) for the advantage of selling the produce of their respective manufactories, at Vienna.

The erection of the booths beneath our windows began during the last sunshine of October ; but they are now covered very dismally with snow, and though the multifarious articles which they contain draw together numbers of busy bargain-loving souls, the aspect of these temporary bazaars is, just now, dreary enough.

The resolute indifference, however, with which the wayfaring merchants appear to endure the cold discomfort that surrounds them, makes one almost ashamed of considering them as objects of compassion. Their pipes, unaccompanied, as I am told, by any strong potations whatever, seem to afford all the consolation they stand in need of.

Sturdily, contentedly—nay, even gaily, they chaffer with their numerous customers, unmindful of the frequent avalanche that comes sliding down on their broad-beavered heads whenever a more than ordinary vivacity of movement, either within or without the fabric, causes the snow to slide down from their slanting roofs. The commodity that occupies the space immediately below our windows, is that species of coarse pottery which, in contempt of copper, iron,

or tin, is used for nearly every sort of cookery in all ordinary kitchens. If it be our desire to see the humours of the fair, no arrangement could have been more favourable for us ; for who is there among the motley population of Vienna who can fail to want a *häfen*, or a *reindel*, or an *irdenes gefäss*, in which to boil, stew, bake, and roast their *vivres*? Moreover, this traffic, unlike most others, is wholly carried on upon the snow-covered pavement of the street, a hundred square yards of which is converted into a warehouse, unroofed indeed, save by the lead-coloured clouds; and in this space is packed and piled thousands and tens of thousands of brown glazed pots and pans, from a size that might accommodate a single egg, to the majestic reservoir of many gallons.

So we have nothing to do but walk to the windows in order to behold all the notable housewives of the district come in rotation to repair the culinary fractures of the last six months. This might not offer much interesting matter in any other place, but in Vienna it really produces a great deal. The population is, in fact, composed of so many nations, that such a succession of groups is sure to be full of picturesque interest. Now and then in London, and particularly if you migrate into the city, you may see specimens of most of the nations that people the earth ; but you will not see them there as you do here. If you meet a Greek, you will see in him only a puzzled-looking solitary stranger, who, you may

be very sure, will get away again as fast as he can. If you see a Turk, it is the same : a Bohemian peasant only appears to you as a thief and a vagabond ; a Hungarian one you never see at all ; and though you may in the course of such a migration meet Jews enough, and to spare, still it will only be in the shape of old clothes-men ; and your best approach to an Armenian is but the very dirty vendor of vile rhubarb.

Far different is the case at Vienna. If you pause before one of the handsomest mansions in the city and ask to whom it belongs, “ To Sina, the Greek merchant,” will be the answer. If you pass a large coffee-house whose appearance proclaims it the resort of wealth, and whose vapours fill the air, as it wafts by, with assurance that it is the *musée* of good coffee, enter it, and you will find yourself surrounded with turbans and caftans, with hookahs and meerschauums, while its richly-clad customers, instead of looking as if they were melancholy wanderers in an unknown land, will show by their portly presence that they consider themselves as welcome and as much at home there, as if they had never laid siege to the city, or barbarously battered the spire of St. Stephen’s. A black-eyed, clean-limbed Bohemian is here an honoured servant of the empire, even when most lowly born ; and often a wealthy manufacturer from among them visits the fair in a costume that might make the fortune of a melodrama. Hungarians, Slavonians, Croats, all assemble here with

the exclusive trading privileges of Austrian subjects and in dresses, at this season particularly, unspeakably whimsical and picturesque.

As for the children of Israel to describe to you well and learnedly their position here, would be no easy task. They are clothed in sable and fine linen, and fare sumptuously every day. Thus much I can certainly take upon me to assert ; but how far they are, or ever will be kindly and affectionately amalgamated with the other members of this Christian and Catholic empire, is a question that I will not undertake to answer. Their power, as an immensely rich body, is very great, and penetrates widely and deeply amongst some important fibres of the body politic ; but they are not, perhaps, the better loved for this by their Christian fellow-subjects, and the consequence is, that their social position is more preeminently a false one than that of any set of people I have ever had an opportunity of observing.

The love of this stiff-necked race for gold is so well known and so universally acknowledged in every land into which their active avarice has found an entrance, that it will appear little better than a paradox to say that it is the excess of this eagerly-sought gold which generates the canker so evidently destroying the heart's ease of all the Israelitish tribes in Vienna. Yet so it is, or I am much mistaken. Where their passion for the accumulation of wealth has been gatified, as it has been probably in all the

cities of the world, by the slow but sure accumulation of grains, instead of ingots, their success brought happiness : the gaberdeen of the Jewish goldsmith waxed warmer and sleeker, and his black-browed daughter was honoured in the eyes of all her tribe by the string of pearls paternal fondness permitted her to wear, while waiting, it may be, a good market for them. All this was in the natural order of things, and so much of remission from the condemnation that hangs upon them appears to have been permitted. But when, in defiance of their wandering doom, they venture to congregate together in large and wealthy communities, and, not even contented with this, attempt the engrafting themselves into the society of Christians hostile to them alike from principle and prejudice, it is not very difficult to perceive that the result must of necessity be vanity for ever wounded, and vexation of spirit for ever renewed.

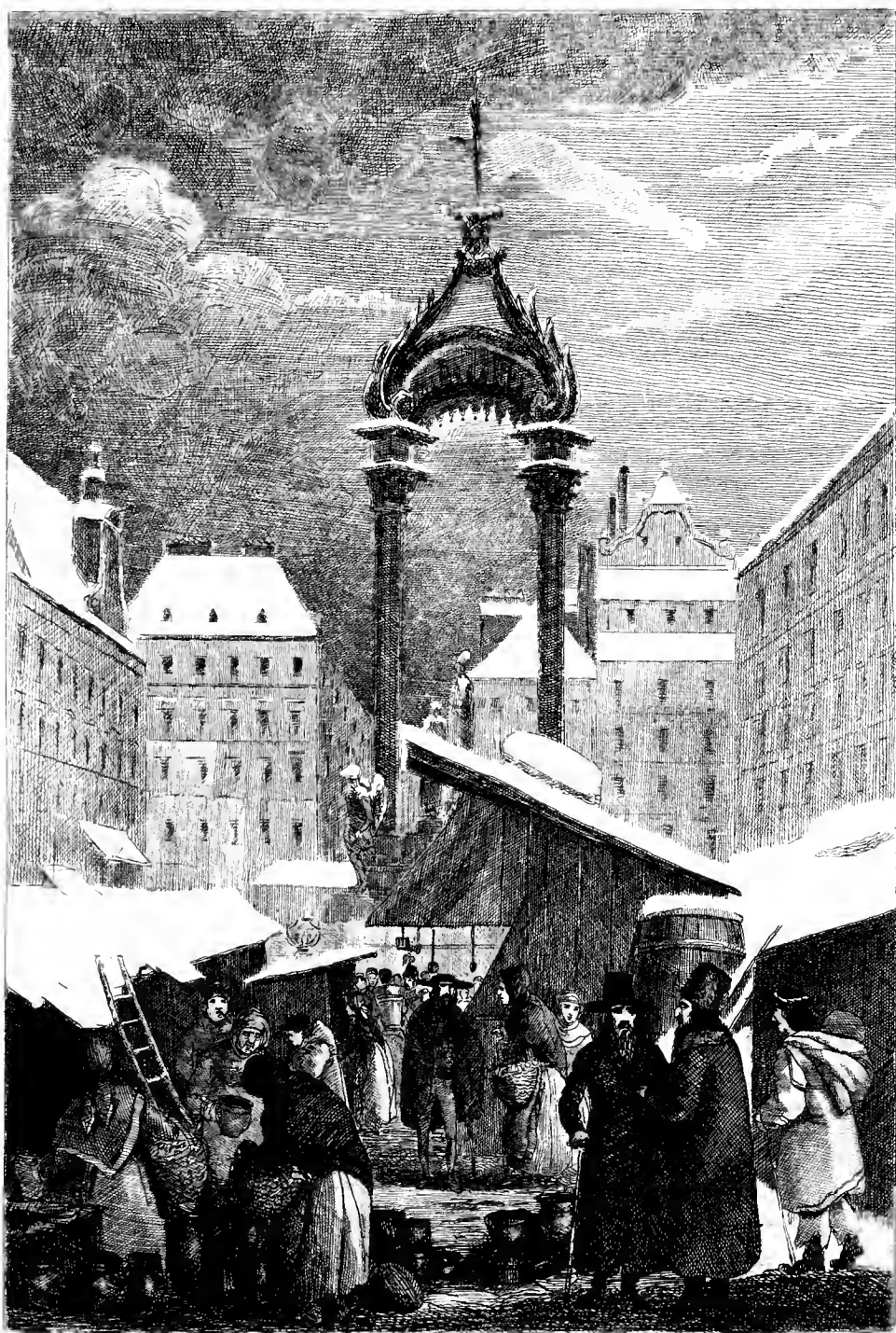
Most heartily do I wish that every Jew scattered over the wide surface of the earth could at this instant see the blessed light of truth, and learn to read by it the law of God aright, and so be converted ; but the manner in which this process of conversion is sometimes brought about here by the aid of other feelings than those of conviction, is not calculated to awaken any very warm sentiment of approving welcome in the breast of surrounding Christians ; and though all must rejoice in the hope that the children

of converted Israelites will profit by the Christian education they may receive, it is quite vain to expect that the ceremony of adult baptism shall, like a touch of a magician's wand, unite hearts that were severed before they were born, or make one race and one people out of elements as unmixable as oil and water.

Do not believe that these observations arise from intolerance; they arise solely from observation. No one who visits Vienna with his eyes open, and mixes at all in society, but will find reason to agree with me in the opinion that any attempt to blend Christians and Jews in social and familiar union may answer for an hour or a day, but will not eventually lead to affection or tolerance on either side.

But where was I when the Jews rose up and carried me away with them captive? Even in our snow-mantled Hohen Markt. — I was endeavouring, I believe, to give you some idea of the varied population which sends up its hum even through our double windows — (no house in Vienna, observe, from the very highest to the very lowest, is without this air-excluding arrangement.) — But I shall succeed best, I think, by sending you Mr. H.'s sketch of the fair, as taken from the door of the house in which I live. He assures me that his fingers were very nearly frost-bitten thereby, so I hope you will accept it graciously.

I am going to-day with my son and daughter to dine with our ambassador, where we expect to have the honour of meeting the Prince and Princess Metternich. I am delighted at this: of all the distinguished men in Europe, Prince Metternich is the one I feel the greatest curiosity to become acquainted with.



Drawn and Etched by A. Hervieu.

NOVEMBER, FAIR IN THE BOULEVARD MARKET



LETTER XXXIII.

Recherche de l'Absolu.—Dinner at Sir Frederic Lamb's.—Maréchal Marmont.—Prince Metternich.—Princess Metternich.—Discussion on the character of the Minister.—Vienna Dinner-parties.

Vienna, 5th Nov.

ONE of M. Balzac's wise books is called "*La Recherche de l'Absolu*," — a title that might perfectly well have described my feelings of interest and curiosity yesterday as I entered the drawing-room of Sir Frederic Lamb; for is not Prince Metternich held throughout the world to be the "abstract and brief chronicle" *de l'absolu*? And was it not Prince Metternich I was seeking with all the speculation of my eyes? I soon perceived, however, that he was not to be found there; for we were to have the honour of meeting the princess also, and as yet there was no lady in the room.

Before the great minister arrived, about a dozen gentlemen had assembled. Lord Alvanley and the Duc de Raguse were among them. I believe I almost started when "Maréchal Marmont" was presented to me. I knew not that he was in Vienna, and his name recalled such a multitude of historic

circumstances connected with it, that I felt as if the ghost of Napoleon could be at no great distance. The Duc de Raguse is a tall thin man, with white hair and coal-black eyebrows. It is a countenance which once seen can never be forgotten ; much strong emotion seems to have passed over it, and when not lighted up by conversation, I should say that it expressed great melancholy.

At some word or signal given, Sir Frederic Lamb left the room and returned with a very lovely woman on his arm, followed by a gentleman whom the least observant eye that ever served "to guard its master 'gainst a post" could not mistake for an ordinary mortal. I had expected to see not only a distinguished man, but one who bore the impress of being so on his brow, and neither the seeing nor hearing Prince Metternich can ever have disappointed any one : his whole person, countenance, and demeanour are indicative of high station, commanding intellect, and very finished elegance. He led me to dinner, and I had the advantage of his conversation while it lasted ; for the table was not only as round, but as large as King Arthur's, rendering general conversation of course impossible. Were I to tell you what I thought of the quality of his conversation, you might perhaps say that my admiration was the natural result of listening to opinions I approved ; so I will for the present enjoy the recollection of all I heard in silence. Nevertheless, there was one observation that I am tempted to record,

despite my usually firm resolution of never repeating "table-talk" unless the names be withdrawn: but I must be forgiven now, both for the sake of the words, which to my mind have much wisdom in them, as well as because the speaker is one of those who must submit to have what they utter remembered.

While talking of some of the strange blunders that had occasionally been made by politicians, he said, as nearly as I can recollect and translate the words, (for he conversed with me in French,) "I believe that the science of government might be reduced to principles as certain as those of chemistry, if men, instead of theorising, would only take the trouble patiently to observe the uniform results of similar combinations of circumstances." His highness also, while at table, told me an anecdote that I may repeat without scruple, as he concluded it by saying, "Je vous fais cadeau de cela."

At the time Ali Pacha, the celebrated rebel, ventured to raise his banner against his master the Sultan, Prince Metternich received a letter from him; in which, after some polite acknowledgments of his high esteem and admiration, he proceeded to the business that led him to write; which was, to request that the prince would immediately despatch to him a "*constitution maker*," as he was desirous of ruling the country he was "about to conquer" after the most approved European model, "but as we happened," continued the prince, "to be on the most amicable footing with the Sultan whom it was his

purpose to dethrone, I was obliged to decline the patronage he so obligingly offered me."

The prince is of middle height, rather thin than otherwise, with handsome and regular features ; his hair quite grey, and the prevailing expression of his countenance that of mild benevolence ; but in his light blue eyes there is a character of deep and earnest thoughtfulness that is exceedingly remarkable. His person and manners are eminently dignified and graceful ; and there is moreover such an air of calm philosophical tranquillity in his aspect, that had I been told, out of a hundred gentlemen chosen at hazard, to select the one who for twenty-five years had held a steady and unvacillating course, while all beyond the circle of his influence had blundered, trembled, and tottered, I am very sure I should have made no mistake.

T * * 's remark upon him as we drove home was, that in appearance he was just such a man as his fancy painted Sir William Temple to have been ; and the illustration is so good a one, that I doubt if I could find another equally likely to suggest something approaching to the appearance and manner of Prince Metternich.

The princess, who is his third wife, is a young and very lovely woman, full of animation and intellect, and with a little of that piquante sauciness of manner which is so easily forgiven in a pretty woman, especially when softened by a smile of such exceeding sweetness as often plays about the mouth of

this charming woman even in the midst of her liveliest sallies.

About a week before this dinner-party, I was at the house of a lady who was among the first that called upon me after my arrival here. It was an evening party, and two rooms were full of company ; but in the third I found myself during part of the evening with only the mistress of the house, and three other persons, apparently her intimate friends. They were all introduced to me, and the conversation fell into a discussion of what was best worth seeing in Vienna. Libraries, collections of all sorts, palaces, gardens, and so forth, were all enumerated ; and then one of the gentlemen added, “ and be sure not to leave the city till you have seen Prince Metternich.”

I told him, and very truly, that of all the sights named, that was decidedly the one I should be the most sorry to miss.

After this, the conversation fell at once, and without a shadow of reserve, upon the minister ; and so perfectly free and unrestrained was the discussion, that I could not resist uttering a remark upon it, observing that I had not expected to find political subjects canvassed in a manner so perfectly unreserved in the salons of Vienna.

“ There is no place in the world where it is more common to meet with free discussion,” observed another gentleman, who had been very freely blaming what he called a want of literary patronage in the

government of Austria. “There is no place in the world where there is less interference with private opinion. Though there are several points of Prince Metternich’s policy that I think I should not adopt if I were premier, there is no point of his conduct that does not command my highest esteem. I am persuaded, that if, instead of temperate discussion, he could overhear the most offensive personal observations against himself,—if indeed any Austrian could be found to utter them,—he would neither testify nor feel the slightest emotion of displeasure. But were he to learn that any act or word which could endanger the tranquillity and well-being of the country were either committed or uttered, he would not rest till it was checked and rendered harmless by some means or other. I will dare to assure you, that no Roman of them all, from the philosophical Cato to the grumbling Cinna, was a more true and devoted patriot than Metternich; and, what is perhaps a higher praise still, after twenty-five years of power greater than has ever fallen to the lot of any minister in any country, I do not believe that there is a man to be found who can say that Prince Metternich has ever injured him.”

There was something both in the matter and manner of this decidedly impartial testimony, as well as in the warmth with which it was listened to and echoed by the little committee present, not one of whom belonged in any way to the private circle of the prince, which was well calculated to add a new

species of esteem to the admiration with which the talents of this great statesman must inspire every one, let his politics be what they may. I remembered it as I looked upon his fine placid brow, and I thought that the serenity which it expressed, and which seemed almost incompatible with the complicated anxieties to which his position must perforce have exposed him, became intelligible as I did so.

Before the dinner-party at Sir Frederic Lamb's separated, the princess engaged us to dine with them next Monday.

One of the points in which Vienna differs from London is in the shortness of the interval allowed for dinner-parties. The length of time passed at table is nearly the same as in London ; but the gentlemen hand the ladies back to the drawing-room in the same order that they led them from it, and within half an hour afterwards the party is broken up, each seeking the amusement of the evening where he lists. This is excellent for those who love the theatre, as it enables them to enjoy it without its interfering with any other engagement whatever ; but to those who do not want a play every night, and who if they cannot get a good opera had rather have none at all, it leaves a very shapeless interval before the hour for the *soirée* arrives. Many people, I understand, make all their morning visits, or what must be considered as equivalent to them, during this time ; a process that may perhaps be favourable to digestion : but long habit leads me to prefer a two hours' lounge

upon a sofa, with the accompaniments of strong tea, and an appendix to the conversation of the dinner-table;—after this I am quite ready to start anew, but not before. The omission, however, of that mischievous hour which with us dyes the lips of half the company with claret, and the cheeks of the other half with green and yellow ennui, is very decidedly an advantage, though it is, I think, too dearly purchased by this early breaking up of what is so agreeable. Therefore, *on the whole*, I consider the London mode the best, and only lament that nothing in this lower world can be absolutely perfect.

LETTER XXXIV.

The Arsenals.—Decorations of the Imperial Arsenal.—Warlike Memorials.—Napoleon.—Maria Louisa.—Gustavus Adolphus.—Carbonari.—The City Arsenal.—Fieschi.—Godfrey of Bouillon.—Turks.—Dinner at Prince Metternich's.—The Princess.

Vienna, Nov. 9th.

THE two arsenals of Vienna are not among the least interesting of its collections. The Austrians are conservative in every sense of the word; for not only do they cherish their government, and the laws they have long tried and found good for them, but every memorial of their history that can be snatched from time is hoarded with love and reverence; and it is this sentiment which renders their country so rich beyond all others in local antiquities.

Of the two arsenals, one is the national repository of arms and armour of every description; and the other, of all warlike accoutrements and interesting memoranda belonging exclusively to the city.

The first of these occupies a great extent of ground; and though I doubt if the portion of it appropriated to the preservation of arms be as extensive as the space used for the same purpose in the Tower of London, the effect is more striking from the man-

ner in which the rooms forming the exhibition follow each other. In saying this, however, I must make an exception in favour of our magnificent horse-armoury, which is decidedly superior to everything else of the kind that I have ever seen.

The building which constitutes the Imperial Arsenal forms a quadrangle, the lower story of which appears to be occupied by various offices, storehouses, and workshops. The large area it encloses contains a multitude of cannon, but all, if I mistake not, dismounted. Round the walls of the building are suspended, in catenaries as graceful as if the material were of the delicate fabric of Venice, the enormous chains which the Turks used during their attack upon Vienna, in 1529, to obstruct the navigation of the Danube ; and they certainly form a very appropriate decoration to the national edifice upon which they hang.

The upper story of the building runs in an unbroken suite round the whole quadrangle ; and it is here that the ancient and modern arms of the empire are preserved, together with a most extraordinary accumulation of relics and curiosities connected with the military history of the country.

The quantity of modern arms deposited there, packed into an incredibly small space, is sufficient completely to equip two hundred thousand men. These are for the most part arranged in solid masses, most ingeniously converted into architectural embellishments.

The promenade takes the spectator through a succession of elegant arcades, where columns of muskets rise into most delicate proportions, till they are finished by capitols of pistols. Suns of swords and stars of daggers glitter above his head; while ever and anon the vault is darkened by the black wings of a gigantic eagle, whose feathers if plucked would yield a thousand sabres.

There is something in the semi-barbaric splendour of these belligerent decorations extremely imposing; and when now and then the conductor opens a little door, prettily fluted with bayonets, and permits you to perceive that what your peaceable imagination represented to you as innocent brick and mortar, is in truth a mass of all the implements ever invented by man for the destruction of his fellows, the recollection that they are in the hands of friends instead of foes is vastly agreeable.

But though all this is singularly handsome both in magnitude and arrangement, the great interest of the exhibition rests not in the power of the empire to wage future wars, but in the venerable traces of those which have already passed over her. Multitudes of banners, many of them connected with historic anecdotes, assist in forming the warlike trophies which adorn this temple of Janus; and at intervals, placed reverently apart, each on its separate pedestal, are preserved some treasured personal relics of all the most distinguished commanders who have shed their blood for Austria. The hat, the sword, the

decorations given by their sovereign, together with a brief statement of the claim of each to the gratitude of their country, form a series of the most touching military monuments that I have ever seen. The features of many of their emperors are also consecrated in the familiar memory of the people by busts and portraits. Of Francis, the beloved of all hearts, memorials are multiplied, and preserved with a care and costliness so far surpassing all the rest, that any one, knowing what he was to Austria, must divine at once to whom they bear reference.

The suits of armour, worn by all the Habsbourg line of princes, as long as armour was used, make a curious and interesting part of this collection. The history of this species of warlike panoply may be very satisfactorily studied here,—and the more so, as in many instances, side by side with the rich casing of the prince, the buff and iron defence of one of his followers is also preserved. Assuredly there were giants in those days—or the suits have been fashioned on purpose to make poor little posterity believe so.

Among the miscellaneous curiosities preserved here, is the buff coat of the Lion of the North, Gustavus Adolphus. In the back of it, just in the loin, is a round hole through which the treacherous bullet entered which brought his death. The coat is made of elk-skin, and is of extraordinary thickness, especially in the flaps, which are at least a third of an inch in thickness. Another relic is the baloon in

which General Jourdan reconnoitred the movements of the Austrian army at the battle of Fleurus.

Among the conquered standards, those of Napoleon are recognised at a glance by their massive splendour : there are banners of almost all ages and all nations here, but none even attempting in any degree to approach the gorgeous stateliness and golden glitter of these. We paused, of course, to examine and admire them. A few moments afterwards, our conductor stopped before a frail thin morsel of silk that, he told us, had been a standard of the Carbonari. "It was strong enough," said he, scornfully lifting it with a cane which he held in his hand, "to last as long as it was wanted." The banners of the imperial adventurer were embroidered, as it should seem, with a less just prescience of the period it would be necessary they should endure.

What the feeling was which dictated the remark, it is not very easy to divine ; but our conductor, who was evidently a most true-hearted Austrian, stopped short before one of the richest of the Napoleon standards, and said, "This one was embroidered by the hands of Maria Louisa of Austria."

I wonder if the Duchess of Parma ever paid the arsenal a visit ?

I remember, at the time of the Fieschi plot, hearing the arrangement of his infernal machine called "very ingenious ;" but at any rate it was not very original, for in this arsenal at Vienna we were

shown a machine, bearing date 1678, by which fifty muskets could be let off in any direction and at any angle by the application of a single match. The neatness of the arrangement is extraordinary; and the compact form and diminutive size of the case in which they are contained, still more so. The construction of the instrument has not been improved by the science of the hundred and fifty odd years which have passed since this murderous bijou was fabricated; for it was clearly demonstrated to us that in no case could the agent employed to let it off be wounded by it. But the construction of this perfect specimen was, we were told, extremely costly.

I should prolong my letter to a volume, were I to enumerate all the rich, rare, queer, odd, interesting articles contained in this very comprehensive museum; but there is one more which I must mention, because to me it was incomparably the most interesting of all. This was the tattered trophy composed of the standard, hat, and arms of Godfrey of Bouillon. These almost sacred relics were presented to Austria, as we were told, by the Pope — but what Pope, my treacherous memory forbids me to tell you. Whether from reverence for his cause or for his character, or from affection to the delicious lay which has added such glorious rays to the immortality of both, I know not, but certainly I did pause long before this, and plagued our good conductor by slipping back, after he thought that he

had at last got me fairly away from it, to touch with an ungloved hand a fragment of his sacred banner, and to look again upon the beaver that had shaded his noble brow. I never remember to have felt so thankful for the perfect belief that what I looked upon was the genuine thing it purported to be, as on this occasion. The standard (which so many valiant eyes have looked upon) is of crimson silk, spotted with gold; and though almost dropping asunder with age, it is still rich in colour. In the centre of it is painted a figure of Christ crucified, as large as life. I almost doubt whether the reverence of the Romish Church for well-authenticated relics deserves all the ridicule which our reformed wisdom throws upon it. I confess I do not quite approve the attributing miraculous powers to them; but, leaving all such quackery out of the question, there is something very moving and exciting to the affections in the close contact with objects connected with what we greatly reverence.

It is abominable to hurry through the city arsenal, as I must perforce do, for fear of wearying you too entirely with the subject; for it is deserving, instead of a passing word, of long and patient examination, being filled with antiquities and curiosities of the very highest class of interest. To enter into anything like a full account of this, is impossible. The feature most strongly marked throughout the whole collection, is the mixed feeling of resentment against the Turks for having dared to make their

crescents gleam upon this Christian city, and triumph at having so very satisfactorily driven them off again. Turkish arms, therefore, and Turkish banners, Turkish saddles and Turkish drums, Turkish shawls, and Turkish turbans, contribute in no inconsiderable degree to the collection. One memento of the last siege is a very ghastly one, being no other than the scull of the strangled vizier, who met the fate of all unsuccessful Turks (at least in those days of Ottoman barbarity), and peace having been happily concluded between the Porte and the Empire, this grinning remnant of him who had so disturbed their quiet (though in vain) was sent in proof of amity from the Sultan. The crimson cord that punished his ill fortune is still about his neck; and it would be difficult to turn the eye in any direction round him without its encountering some testimony of Christian triumph and Mahometan defeat.

This collection is enriched with many suits of handsome and curious armour. Among these we noticed several that had been used by the municipal guard of Vienna: they were dated 1546, and each suit was numbered on the breast.

* * * * *

Since my last letter, we have had the honour of dining at Prince Metternich's. His mansion is a very splendid one, and the entertainment extremely elegant. The English ambassador, Lord Alvanley, and several other gentlemen whom we had met be-

fore, as well as some who were strangers to us, were of the party.

His highness loses nothing by being looked at and listened to again : and as to the princess, she is so very fascinating a person, that those whose fate must ultimately throw them at a distance from her should take care betimes not to like her too well. There is a variety, a mobility of countenance in her, that attracts the attention with a charm which it is difficult to describe ; and moreover, she is more perfectly free from affectation and the apparent consciousness of beauty than (with one or two choice exceptions) I ever saw so pretty a woman. Those who are happy enough to be much with her may be often, I think, tempted to address her in the words of Racine :

*Je ne trouve qu'en vous, je ne sais qu'elle grace,
Qui me charme toujours, et jamais ne me lasse.*

It is, in truth, a face and a manner that one should never be weary of watching.

LETTER XXXV.

The Prater. — Music. — Passion for Amusement. — Rareness of Intoxication. — Contentment. — France and England. — Austria and America. — Deficiency of Equipages in the Prater. — Skilful Driving. — Mode of clearing the Streets. — Number of Carriages.

November 22nd, 1836.

TO-DAY we have made our third visit to the Prater, yet I suspect that I have omitted to tell you anything about it; which is the more sinful, because it is one of the few things in Vienna to which report has done justice, and the not offering my tribute of admiration to its beauty may be enough to lead you into the great blunder of doubting if all you have heard in its praise be true. Doubt no longer, then, if my testimony can content you,—for as I have driven and walked, and driven again, through the whole of its wide extent, I am qualified to pass judgment, and I certainly believe that no city in the world has an area of such extent and beauty attached to it, devoted freely and without reserve to the use and enjoyment of the people.

This noble park possesses, in truth, every possible advantage to render it a source of enjoyment to all

ranks. In size it is so magnificent, that our three Parks, and Kensington Gardens to boot, might be placed within it, and leave space enough between them to prevent quarrelling for room. A branch of the Danube passes through it;—the innumerable drives in all directions are excellent; the trees abundant, and many of them peculiarly magnificent in growth,—and the numerous herds of deer which seek shelter beneath them are so tame, that every sentimental Jacques may enjoy the pleasure of gazing at a group of fifty together without fearing that his step or his voice should startle them. In addition to all this, may be found for the seeking, abundance of agreeable cafés, restaurants, and guinguettes, where all sorts of refreshments may be obtained at the same prices as in the town, and whence every evening during the fine season those strains of music may be heard which seem to form as necessary a part of the existence of an Austrian as the air he breathes, or the bread he eats.

This singularly strong national *besoin* of amusement and music, and the manner in which it is not only unchecked, but cherished by the authorities, furnishes, in my belief, one of the principal keys to the mystery of the superior tranquillity and contentment of the populace of this country over that of every other.

It must, in considering this, be remembered that these people are very rarely intoxicated. I am assured on all sides that this is the case; and in

confirmation of it I can certainly state, that during the three months I have already been among them, I have not yet seen a single person intoxicated. Were it otherwise, indeed, the result of these constant assemblings together after the labours of the day are over might probably be very different ; but as it is, they meet kindly, remain together happily, and part soberly, without its ever entering their heads that they could be the better for a riot, or that a revolution of any kind would prove in the slightest degree agreeable to them. It would require more light than any the lantern of Diogenes carried, to find an Austrian of the labouring classes who would consent to leave his waltz, his glass of small beer, and his joyous carol, for the sake of the wisest newspaper that ever was written, or even for the pleasure of hearing himself hold forth on the nature of government, or the defective structure of their church establishment.

As to which mode of passing the hours of relaxation from toil is best for those whom it has pleased God to place in a situation that renders toil necessary, I will not attempt to decide : it is a question upon which wiser heads than mine might work with profit; and it is a question, too, upon which those wise heads whose deliberations must influence the happiness of millions ought to work with very patient deliberation before they reject it as trivial. But upon this, as upon every other question on which practical experience is important, persons quite in-

capable of reasoning may be permitted to give evidence; and therefore, without being suspected of any wish to meddle with matters above my comprehension, I may state the observations which chance has enabled me to make on the subject.

I have, as an eye-witness, known France long enough to say that I have seen her under the influence of both experiments. I paid her repeated visits between the years 1818 and 1827; and a people less given to neglect their own pleasures for the sake of superintending the business of others, or more amiably disposed to obey the precept, "*Faites votre bien, avec le moindre mal d'autrui,*" could not exist. I might almost say the same of our once "merry" England: for though I never saw her under the happy influence of the martyred Charles's care for her "*Sunday sports and pastimes,*" I yet remember the time when her sons loved a game at quoits or at cricket better than a political meeting, and when a dance round the May-pole would have decidedly won the day against the most learned examination into the law of tithes that ever was uttered in an ale-house. America, on the contrary, I have never known when the gayest of her pains-taking citizens would have turned for a moment from their undying labours of electioneering for the very merriest amusement that fancy ever imagined, or light-heartedness enjoyed: nor on the other hand, have I ever known Austria when her populace would have preferred the delights of a political union society to a waltz in a

guinguette, or a chorus in a vineyard or a corn-field. I must, therefore, in making my comparison, set France and England as they were, against France and England as they are, and Austria and America against each other.

In doing this, however, I would rather appeal to the judgment of others than to my own. Is there any one who has looked on, as I have done, merely as a spectator, who can feel a doubt as to which state of popular feeling produces the greater amount of happy hours and general well-being? Was the peasant of Old England, whose whole of politics consisted in tossing his hat into the air, and uttering a lusty "God save the King!" a more or a less happy being than the puzzled, fretful, deluded labourer, who may now be seen sitting in many a beer-shop, with knit brows and most sagacious elevation of nose, while he listens to the Cicero of his parish, while he proves to the satisfaction of all the clowns, tinkers, and tailors within hearing, that all men are equal, not in heaven but on earth, and that it is the duty of every citizen to assist in making the laws by which he is to be governed?

Was the Frenchman while contented to let all his political discontents evaporate in uttering, with a sort of proud puffy sigh, a word of regret for his lost Emperor, and then consoling himself and his belle with a contre-danse and a chansonette, a more or a less happy being than he who, since the gift of political philosophy fell upon the nation, spends the

nightly sous that used to enrich the fiddler in feeing the secretary of his society, for noting down in cypher the wisdom that calls the assassin's pistol, an instrument of justice, and the blasphemy of traitors, a patriotic hymn ?

And now let Austria and America stand face to face, and say whether, in that rank which forms the majority in all nations, the *sans souci* that is, as I may say, made for them here, is more or less replete with happiness, than the restless, roaring, rioting process of election in America, which keeps every man's mind in a fever from January to December, and which brings as its most distinguishing privilege, impunity to Lynch-law and whisky-drinking ?

To me, I own, it seems nearly impossible that any honest man could lay his hand upon his heart and pronounce judgment in favour of occupying and harassing the minds of the labouring classes with political discussions. In fact, so monstrous a judgment cannot be an honest one, and it is impossible to believe that any one would make use of this class as political agents, excepting upon the cat's-paw principle. Alas ! poor souls ! how few of the state chestnuts scrambled for in any country have fallen to the share of the wretched dupes who have been cajoled from their looms and their forges to pass votes against their pastors and masters !

But should any one really and truly have doubts upon the subject, let him come here—let him see the result of the non-representative system as it works

upon the labouring classes of Austria, and then go home and clamour for universal suffrage if he can.

But I have lost my way, and wandered wide of the Prater ; and before I quite leave it, I must tell you that, beautiful as it is, either as walk, ride, or drive, I have never yet seen it display such brilliance in equipages and company as either Hyde Park or the Champs Elysées. Its great extent, indeed, renders this very difficult ; for many hundred carriages and many thousand people might be enjoying its beauty without very perceptibly increasing it. But there are one or two fixed days in the Spring which, like the Lonchamps of Paris, collect all the beauty and fashion of Vienna into this noble park ; and then, I am told, the spectacle is really magnificent—as in truth it must be, if this wide-spreading and finely-wooded area is really *full of company*, which is said upon these occasions to be literally the case.

At that season, too, I believe many gentlemen and some few ladies appear on horseback—without which accompaniment no spectacle of the sort can, in my opinion, be perfect ; but hitherto I have seen nothing of the kind worth mentioning. The streets are now very full of carriages ; but neither in streets, park, nor on the Glacis,—which would make a delightful ride—have I as yet seen a dozen equestrians.

The carriages are perhaps of less highly-finished elegance than ours ; but the horses are often very good, and the equipages generally rendered gay by a

full-plumed chasseur behind. At this season, too, the costume of the coachman adds, in no inconsiderable degree to the dignity of the set-out, for he sits aloft in the semblance of a majestic polar bear, with rich fur so mantling round him, that whether he has a nose or not is left in doubt. Eyes, however, he has most certainly, and well he uses them, for the driving here is no child's-play, yet accidents rarely occur. The streets are nearly all of them very narrow, and crowded with carriages of every description, as well as by foot passengers, who are protected by no trottoir from being run over at every instant; but the thing never happens, notwithstanding. The palm of skill must, I think, be divided between the drivers and walkers; for the manner in which at one moment the whole street appears to be full of people, walking quite at ease, and at large, and is left clear for a full-speed equipage the next, is quite extraordinary. One of the means by which this difficult but necessary clearing is obtained, is a sort of cry uttered by the coachman, which at first I thought betokened that some lamentable accident had happened, but I have now learned to understand that it is only used to prevent such. The effect at night, when people are repairing, all at the same hour, to the theatres, is very odd; for these warning notes almost amount to a continued cry, which to the uninitiated must certainly seem to announce some great and general calamity.

The paving of the streets is admirable here: and

whether it be from the nature of the stones, or the skilful manner of placing them, I know not, but I never saw any streets so perfectly in good repair from one end of the city to the other. So extremely smooth is the laying of these stones, that, instead of crippling the feet like those of Paris, the walking over them, if protected from the carriages, would be very nearly as agreeable as over the splendid flags of our unequalled trottoir.

This excellent state of repair, however, is certainly not occasioned by want of use, for never were streets more alive than these of Vienna have been since winter called her citizens to take shelter within her walls; and I think, from what I hear and see, that the luxury of a carriage is more general, and descends lower in society, than with us; so that what with the number of equipages, the spirit of gaiety which keeps them always in action, and the comparatively small space in which they have to revolve, the racket is everywhere fully equal to that of the full season in London.

LETTER XXXVI.

Imperial Library.—Want of Room.—Arrangement of the Books.—
Depôt of Imperial Porcelain Manufactory. — Austrian Monopolies. — Maria Theresa.

Vienna, November 23rd, 1836.

THE Imperial Library, and its rich collection of manuscripts, rare editions, and so forth, is too well known for you to require of me much information concerning it; I shall not, therefore, be very learned on the subject: but it would be ungrateful were I to omit telling you that from the happy chance of our being accompanied through the rooms by the Count G * * * *, the hours spent in seeing it were among the most agreeable we have passed in Vienna. This gentleman has some charge connected with the library, of the title of which I am ignorant; but if it be one requiring great general information, and very profound erudition, the Emperor is fortunate in having found a person so peculiarly well calculated to fill it.

This very noble collection consists of above three hundred thousand volumes, exclusive of dissertations; and is of course daily increasing, all new works of celebrity in any country being added to it. I cast

my eyes upon recently received numbers of the Quarterly and Edinburgh reviews, and longed to run away with them, not having beheld even their *appétissant* exteriors since I left home.

The building appropriated, and indeed erected, for this collection, by Charles VI, in the year 1726, makes part of the wide-spreading and irregular Bourg, or Imperial Palace. The approach to it from the residence is by some of those handsome, but very intricate passages by which the dwelling of the Emperor is connected with a multitude of edifices, all by their widely-distant public entrances perfectly distinct, yet all making part of the Bourg. The door for the public approach to the library is at the corner of the Joseph Platz, and leads to a handsome staircase, enclosed by an iron grille, over which is inscribed "*Bibliotheca Palatina*."

The principal room, of 240 French feet by 54, is highly magnificent; it is of majestic height, with an oval dome in the middle, supported by eight marble columns. In the centre of these is a statue of Charles VI; and around it twelve others, emperors of the house of Austria. The whole effect is stately and imposing in no common degree; and it would be still more so, had not the constantly increasing demand for space rendered it necessary to place throughout the whole of this splendid chamber a multitude of cabinets, which though neat enough, and handsome in themselves, are very little in keeping with the gorgeous decorations around them. All

these are lined, and double-lined, with the most splendid of modern publications; and as these go on continually increasing upon their hands, it is difficult to guess what will be the next expedient hit upon to accommodate them. Elsewhere the difficulty would be easily overcome by building an additional room; but you must come to Vienna before you will be able to conceive how very nearly impossible it would be to find a place whereon it might stand. To us of England, who from the hour of our first recollections have been used to see London going on, stretching and spreading herself out, without let or hindrance, over fields, and groves, and parks, till every idea of end or limit to her brick and mortar seems out of the question,—to us this impossibility of finding space whereon to build a single room, may indeed seem strange; but so it is.

In the other apartments belonging to this establishment, there is nothing to strike the eye. One large room is appropriated to readers, who are permitted to demand any work they wish for, and to make whatever extracts they please. Another contains a very valuable collection of books, from the first invention of printing to the year 1500, amounting to 6000 volumes.

The manuscripts, which are extremely numerous, are in two other rooms. From among them we had the gratification of seeing many very interesting things. One of these was a botanical work of the eighth century, with wonderfully accurate drawings, (the state

of art being considered,) and the colours surprisingly preserved. Several Oriental manuscripts are of rare beauty, and many of the missals would repay a long day devoted to their pages. One of these has an interest beyond its own, which, nevertheless, is as great as brilliant miniatures by the hand of the great Albert Durer, and the perfection of illumination, can make it. Its legend tells that a certain beauteous Comtesse St. Croix, having seen this precious little volume in the imperial hands of the Fifth Charles, became enamoured of it, and begged it as a boon from the gallant emperor ; the petition was granted, and one of the pages is enriched by the imperial autograph, which states, indeed, that the book was given to the *Comte* St. Croix. This gracious memorandum is signed CHARLES, in fair large characters, at least a quarter of an inch high.

From the library we proceeded across the Joseph Platz to the Dépôt Imperial Royal, as it is called, of porcelain. The exhibition is a fine one ; and, had I never been in Paris, I should think it finer still. We saw many very beautiful specimens of painting both on large *plaques*, giving copies of some first-rate masters, and on plates, vases, tea-services, and other articles for domestic use ; but, if my recollection does not deceive me, they are not comparable either in the perfection of the material, or the finish of workmanship, to the best pieces that I have seen exhibited at the Louvre. Perhaps, however, a fair comparison could only be made by examining both together ; an

advantage which I have not had here, for the porcelain of the empire is decidedly too beautiful to leave any great temptation either to individuals or shopkeepers to import any other.

The history of this manufacture, as well as that of many others, is interesting in a national and historical point of view ; and furnishes a very satisfactory answer to those who accuse the Austrian government of seizing monopolies for its own advantage, to the injury of the manufacturing classes.

A man of the name of Paquier, a native of Flanders, was the first who established a manufactory for fine porcelain at Vienna ; this was in the year 1718 : but his capital not being equal to his spirit, he was never able to employ above ten, or at the most twenty, workmen at once. The profits upon so small a concern were of course proportionably small ; the enterprising projector contracted debts ; and the fabric was on the verge of being abandoned, when the Empress Maria Theresa, being made acquainted with the facts, decided upon taking charge of it herself.

The resolution once taken, was carried into effect with her usual decisive promptitude ; she purchased the whole concern, for which she paid the sum of 45,000 florins,—about 4,500*l.*—settling moreover an annual pension of 1,500 florins on the meritorious individual who had hazarded his small means to achieve what was excellent in itself, though too mighty an undertaking to be brought to full perfection by him.

The fabric was then put under the superintendence of persons qualified to bring it to the high perfection which it has since reached. It now employs above five hundred persons, and has become a source of honour as well as profit to the empire.

LETTER XXXVII.

News from Portugal.—Necessary restraint upon the Quotation of Authorities.—Discussion upon the Measures pursued by England.—Quotation from the Times.—Coincidence.

28th Nov. 1836.

THE news from Portugal respecting the singular adventures that have recently befallen the young king and queen in their intercourse with their faithful subjects, and particularly the part played by the illustrious supporters of the British flag before Lisbon, has furnished conversation here for the last day or two. Last night, in particular, I was singularly well amused, and, during part of the time very deeply interested by a discussion to which this news gave rise ; and, though the tone sustained throughout the whole was light and lively, I cannot but think that it gave me a better insight into the feelings and opinions entertained by some distinguished persons here relative to England and her present condition, than half a dozen of the portfolio's best intercepted despatches. But, though I see no reason why I should not repeat some of the observations I there listened to, I cannot give them with all the force with which they reached me ; for, were I to sit

down to tell you that such a person said this, and such other said that, I should in my own opinion be guilty of one of the most detestable social offences that can be committed. There are few things more abominable than the giving publicity to what has been uttered, not under the seal of secrecy perhaps, but of a confidence if possible more sacred still,—that of the unchecked, unguarded, fearless intercourse of private conversation. This is a crime that would be hateful anywhere; but here most particularly so, from the esteem that is implied by the very circumstance of being admitted within the reach of hearing it. Once properly introduced into one of the leading salons of Vienna, the progress through them all is made easy. The haughty pride, the cold reserve that is attributed to the Austrian nobility, seems to exist, as far as foreigners are concerned, only so long as it is required to secure themselves from the troublesome approaches of the idle wanderers sent forth by the travelling tribes of England, France, and America, and who all desire nothing so much as to bestow their superfluous leisure upon the most illustrious individuals of the lands through which they pass. This ambition is undoubtedly of a very honourable kind, and requires nothing to merit and ensure success but the being presented in such an un-“questionable form that they shall speak to you.”

On the other hand, it cannot be denied, that, till such presentation takes place, a sufficient degree of

reserve is sustained to keep those who are "strangers" in every sense of the word at a safe distance ; and this is no more than every person of high condition should hold himself bound to do, in order that those who look up to him as example and authority may not go wrong in a matter of very considerable social importance.

Once then, as I have said, this introductory Rubicon passed, and the stranger is admitted with such trusting freedom of access into the noble salons of Vienna, that to abuse the privilege in any way would be villanous. It will be with all care to avoid thus offending, that I shall now and then record the observations which have reached me there ; and if my manner of doing this should not have all the piquancy that might be given by a more accurate exposition of persons and places, remember that the deficiency does not proceed wholly from my dullness.

It was in a small circle of the kind I have alluded to that I found myself yesterday evening, when all present were full of the recently received news from Portugal. I would England had been there to hear how the preposterous measures of her puzzle-headed and unintelligible cabinet were canvassed, commented upon, and judged. Had England's present cabinet been England, I think I should certainly have got up and run away ; but, as it was, I felt much as I might have done if a dear parent's delirium had been under discussion, pained indeed, but not out-

raged, as if some symptom of constitutional insanity, in which all her offspring might be supposed to share, had been made the subject of discourse.

“It is difficult,” said one, “to decide which part of the affair is most remarkable as being the result of the deliberative wisdom of the British counsels. Was it the great original conception of sending forth the armament destined to perform these acts of heroic daring? Or was it the delicate finesse which directed this immortal squadron to remain, like Jove, aloft, watching with god-like eyes the doubtful acts of little men, and little women too? Or, *enfin*, was it the magnanimous ardour with which, when the destined hour was come, the British troops rushed on to action?”

“Ce n’était pas sur ce ton qu’on a parlé autrefois dans ce même salon de vos actes militaires,” whispered a friendly neighbour in my ear.

“Revolutions are of different kinds,” said another. “That which has already taken place in England is as complete, though not so pronounced, as those which have been proclaimed elsewhere. I remember the time, some four or five and twenty years ago, when such an adventure in the Peninsula would have been received at St. James’s, and at St. Stephen’s too, with somewhat different feelings. But the enlightened multitude now seem to like it very much. . . . Perhaps Lord —— de —— will be made Duke of Lisbon? And his portrait, maybe, will be made the pendant to that of the Duke of Wellington

in the National Gallery, classed together in the catalogue as ‘The British heroes of the Peninsula.’”

And then came words of prophecy, but they were uttered in a caustic voice, and I will not repeat them; especially as other words followed in a different tone, and, as I believe and hope, with more correct divination, as well as with more kindness in them.

“No!” said this other voice. “If the strange moral malady that in many directions has proved so contagious does not entirely destroy the existing order of society throughout the whole earth,—a consummation that I do not look for,—England will not fall into permanent democracy. The energy, the high principle, the enduring courage with which for so many years she sustained the commanding position taken at the beginning of the Napoleon wars, and preserved till the passing of the Reform Bill, is no fable. The vast resources of her commercial relations through the whole period, and the high and mighty manner in which she put forth her strength, and ended the fierce struggle at last, have already become historic facts of unquestionable authority; and it is not in the nature of things that such a country should be broken up and destroyed by a few years of popular tumult. The native spirit and the native wisdom that gave soul to England’s counsels in those days of her glory, cannot be annihilated. They will show themselves again.”

“Ainsi soit il!” replied the former speaker. “But

it seems to me that the wiser and the better class of Englishmen, whose position must inevitably give them great influence, are too much disposed to hold themselves apart in dignified quiescence ; while those who would bear them down, and take their places, roar and rave till the deluded populace are led to do their bidding. It is easy enough, no doubt, to understand that the more philosophical and deeply reasoning men may be disgusted by the clamour and ignorance that rage round them ; but they must meet it, battle it, and conquer it, or England must be lost."

" England will not be lost if brave and good men can save her for she holds many such," was the answer." But though it was delightful to me to hear this said, I could have found it in my heart to quote in reply, "*La foi qui n'agit pas, est-ce une foi sincère ?*" but I did not. The conversation then turned on France, on Spain, and then back to Portugal again ; all being canvassed in a spirit of free discussion that it was very delightful to listen to, but which I have no business to repeat. All that concerns England, however, seemed in some sort to belong to me ; and I treasured it, and brought it away with me, with all the care, and all the fidelity my memory would permit.

While reading in Galignani's Messenger to-day an extract from the Times newspaper, I was struck by a coincidence between a phrase I found there, and what I have recently heard uttered here, by one whose

words are never forgotten, when the harassed state of the English cabinet, the contradictions to be traced in her counsels, and the difficulties with which she seemed so overburdened, were the subjects of conversation.

A sentiment of deep contempt for such weak and vacillating counsels was expressed by one of the party.

“England is more deserving of pity than contempt,” said Prince Metternich.

The Times says, in speaking of the acts of one of our leading statesmen, “He fancies himself the rival of Nesselrode, who laughs at him, and the colleague of Metternich, who pities him.”

LETTER XXXVIII.

Austrian Opinions respecting England.—Austrian freedom from Prejudice.—Partiality towards England. — Rareness of Travelling.—Familiarity with English Literature.—Appreciation of Shakspeare and of Byron.—Dislike of Modern French Literature. —Rareness of general Literary Conversation.—Exception in the Salon of the Comtesse de St. Aulaire.—The Discussion of such subjects apparently considered as mauvais ton.

November 29.

It is not one of my least interesting occupations here to listen to the free discussions of England and the English which meet me from persons less mixed up with us, and more completely foreign to our ways and manner of living than almost any other Continental people. On the whole, their judgment of our country (independent of its present unfortunate political position) is very favourable. Of our manner of living, all those who have paid us a visit speak favourably, though it is evident that some things made them stare a little. The strict and unpassable division of ranks here, makes the very general blending of all with us, appear to them almost as extraordinary, if not as monstrous, as harnessing a race-horse and a cow together. But, though held to be strange, I have in no instance heard it

criticised as objectionable : they seem to consider such an arrangement as altogether impossible in Austria, but as being, perhaps, extremely eligible for any other country ; much as we might discuss the Indian fashions of unglazed sashes, and palanquins, nothing doubting that they may be very convenient to our Asiatic friends, but without feeling in the least disposed to make trial of them at home.

There is no trait that has struck me more forcibly in listening to Austrian conversation, than the total absence of *prévention* and prejudice when canvassing the institutions and manners of other countries. No people certainly can more strongly feel, or more freely express, the patriotic partiality which leads them sincerely to prefer their own institutions to all others ; but this appears to be wholly unmixed, particularly as regards England, with any species of reprobation or dislike to the differences that distinguish us. This is not the effect of that smooth and glossy politeness which, not unfrequently, makes a discussion with foreigners of national peculiarities a wordy business of no interest whatever ; but it proceeds from that singular absence of the boasting, *soi-disant* spirit so very often found elsewhere, and so remarkably absent here. I now speak of international differences of the strongest and most important kind ; but on matters of less moment the tolerant feeling goes farther still, for in many instances it is the fashion to imitate us.

Not a few indeed of those who have resided for some time in England are accused of having brought back with them a pretty strong Anglo-mania ; but it appears of a kind leading much more to the introduction of improvement, than discontent. Many of the young nobles manage their studs à l'Anglaise, and English coachmen and grooms are as much in vogue here as Scotch gardeners in England ; moreover, it is no very uncommon thing to hear young men boast of their Melton breed of dogs.

I have never yet conversed with an Austrian who, in speaking of the two countries, did not give the preference to England, over France,—to London, over Paris. This preference has surprised me ; because the strong taste for amusement, which makes so remarkable a feature in the Austrian character, would certainly find more gratification in Paris than in London ; but there seems to be some taste or feeling, stronger still, which leads to the preference so generally acknowledged. Some fifty years ago, this preference, as a mere matter of taste, would have been more intelligible than it is now ; for certainly there are many analogous points in the national characters of England and Austria,—or rather there were such before our light-hearted merry-makings were given up for heavy endless political debates, and our reverence for the altar and the throne had become matter of chance or speculation.

At present, the strongest sympathy between us must, I think, be the common passion for hunting and shooting so strong in both countries; and, perhaps also, a pretty decided predilection for magnificence and display, and that species of practical aristocracy which is just as much alive in our democracy-preaching England, as under the purest and most untouched absolutism in the world.

The number of persons who have visited England is however very small; and, compared to the outpourings of our ever-migrating people, it almost seems as if Austrians never travelled at all. Many causes may contribute to this, but three of them are obvious. First, the government is very far from encouraging the habit among the young nobles. — Secondly, this class, the only one not retained at home by their occupations, are too much accustomed to live in luxury here, to be contented with a secondary style of expense in England; and the different rate at which not only the necessaries but the luxuries and elegancies of life are obtained in the two countries, would render frequent or long excursions to England almost ruinous to those whose incomes are proportioned to what the same style of living would require in Austria. — The third obvious reason for the rareness of Austrian travelling is founded simply upon the fact, that in this case, beyond all others, “*l'appétit vient en mangeant* ;” and the taste for new scenes, new people,

and new ideas, not being imbibed, the pursuit of them is not an occupation greatly coveted.

But, if I have been a little surprised to find how few Austrians have made personal acquaintance with England, I have been greatly more so at discovering their very general familiarity with our literature and language. I think I may say that the majority of the educated classes of both sexes read English, if they do not speak it; and it is evident that many among them are fully competent to enjoy, and to criticise our literature. I do not believe there is any country, where English is not the spoken language, in which Shakspeare is so thoroughly understood and appreciated as here. It is a pleasure of quite a new kind to hear critical discussions on the philosophic Hamlet, or the impassioned Juliet, from strangers who have never seen the land where they were created; and that too in a spirit of fervent admiration, such as I have hitherto fancied could only exist among ourselves.

Milton, I think, is less perfectly understood. The majestic magnificence of his great poem seems to be felt as heavy rather than brilliant; and I have not yet met with any one to whom the matchless sweetness, delicious imagery, and profound observation of his minor poems are the same rich source of ever-new delight that they are to his true worshippers in England.

Pope is read and relished by a few; Spencer seems

to be unknown ; but modern authors, both in prose and verse, are as familiar in men's mouths, and in women's too, as in our own.

Byron takes rank here very decidedly as the first of modern bards, and the admiration expressed for him often amounts to enthusiasm. The Baron Sedletz has made a translation from *Childe Harold*, which, I am assured by many, is the best ever yet made from Byron in any language.

Not to have read the works of Walter Scott would be a distinction almost as remarkable here as in Great Britain ; though in more than one quarter I have heard it said, that he was apt to introduce his friends into very low company. To defend Walter Scott would seem to me an office as unbecoming as making apologies for the manner in which Nature has been pleased to create her fruits and flowers, so I have never contested the point.

Eugene Aram is the novel of Bulwer which I have heard the oftenest cited here, as well as elsewhere, as the favourite ; nevertheless, a genuine German feeling of poetry and romance, shown even in the choice of a felony, elicits constantly an earnest protest against the quality of the offence for which the hero suffers.

The opinions which I have heard expressed upon the modern literature of France, which somehow or other constantly finds its way hither without diffi-

culty, are uniformly the same in every circle. Contempt, disgust, and indignation are the only sentiments I have heard expressed concerning it; with the addition, in many cases, of genuine wonder that their turgid inanity should ever have been endured, even by those who might wish to patronize the principles on which the school is founded.

All this, in the way of criticism, I have picked up *ça et là* in the various salons among which our evenings are now pretty generally spent: but you must not infer from this that the general tone of conversation in good society is of a literary cast; on the contrary, this is very far from being the case. I have been introduced to one or two authors, and also to some persons literary *par excellence*; and among these, and some few others, not thus distinguished, I have collected the criticisms I have now given you: but I have never yet heard anything approaching to general conversation take a literary turn, excepting indeed at the French ambassador's, where the whole of the numerous domestic circle is of an intellectual pre-eminence, that the fashion of no country could obscure, nor the habits of any position conceal.

Whence arises the remarkable absence of all literary discussion—I might say, of all literary allusion—in the salons of Vienna, I am at a loss to conjecture. In the chit-chat of morning visits, both from men and women,—particularly the latter,—

especially if nearly tête-à-tête with them, I discover that they read a great deal, and in several languages; but it certainly appears to be considered as *mauvais ton* to let this fact transpire in company; at least, I can in no other way explain the very obvious fact that such subjects do not make a part of the lively, graceful, and often animated conversation of the drawing-room.

LETTER XXXIX.

Installation of Eleven Knights of the Golden Fleece.—Richness of Costume.—Hungarian Nobles.—Throne.—Tribune of the Empress.—Places prepared for the Knights.—Entry of the Court Cortège.—Magnificence of their Robes.—Ceremony of Knighting.—Preparation for the Banquet.—The juste Milieu.—Origin of the Golden Fleece.

30th November, 1836.

WE have this morning witnessed by far the most splendid pageant I ever saw,—namely, the installation of eleven knights of the order of the Golden Fleece. The Archduke Albert, and his brother the Archduke Charles, sons of the renowned Archduke Charles, who is uncle to the Emperor, were among them; and the ceremony being altogether one of great dignity and parade, the demand for tickets was very urgent: but, by the kindness of Prince Metternich and Sir Frederic Lamb, we all obtained places; and Mr. H—, as usual, contrived to make a very accurate drawing, notwithstanding the crowd.

We were directed to repair to the palace at ten o'clock, as the press in all the rooms leading to

the Salle des Cérémonies was expected to be great, and there might have been difficulty in reaching our places at a later hour. On ascending the principal stairs of the palace, we found that, early as we were, a multitude of others were earlier still, for the throng was already such as to make the progress to the great hall a work of some labour. The crowd however, for the most part, consisted of the military on duty, and the different official attendants on the court. A vast number of courtiers likewise in the richest full-dress were lounging in all the rooms; and not only many who were making their way to the same tribune in the grande salle as ourselves, but many more, whose tickets admitted them only to the rooms through which the royal cortège was to pass, contributed to make the scene one of great movement and bustle.

Having at length safely reached our places, which were in a temporary gallery commanding an excellent view of the whole room, we found ample occupation for the time, before the ceremonies began, in contemplating the varied and brilliant groups of gentlemen that already occupied the floor of the hall. Through this glittering phalanx a stream of ladies were already pressing forward to the different tribunes allotted to them. There were seats in none, except those prepared for the Empress and her ladies, and a few more placed in the tribune set apart for the foreign ministers.

Though not in general a very good stander, an

innate love of finery, common I suppose to all my sex, made me endure it upon this occasion better than I ever remember to have done before. The costumes displayed upon this occasion among the gentlemen surpass, both in elegance of outline and richness of decoration, all I had expected to see ; though I had heard much before-hand of the great splendour of the Hungarian nobles.

I really know nothing at once so gorgeous and picturesque as the uniform of the Hungarian noble body-guard, with their splendid silver accoutrements, their spotted furs, uncut, hanging at their backs, and their yellow morocco boots. The rich and beautiful skins which they all carry, apparently in the very shape in which they came off the animal, give a most striking air of primitive and almost barbarous magnificence.

The other, and more distinguished Hungarian nobles, wore all of them the remarkable national costume of their proud and stately country ; and a finer set of men, or dresses better calculated to set their persons off to advantage, cannot easily be imagined. The military uniforms, also, are prodigiously superb ; and so various, that it required very attentive study to become acquainted with them all. The multiplied and brilliant decorations of Austria are no trifling addition to the magnificence of their full-dress ; and whether it were from the effect of this very effective toilet, or from their personal dignity and grace, I will not pretend to decide,—but, what-

ever the cause, I certainly thought that I had never looked on so elegant an assembly of men before.

The hall itself, as I think I have told you before, is a very fine room, lofty and well-proportioned, with a row of stately columns on each side of it, and decorated with abundance of mirrors and chandeliers. On this occasion the upper end of the chamber was decorated by a magnificent throne, placed on an ample richly-carpeted dais. The draperies of the canopy were of crimson velvet, heavily embroidered with gold, and terminating at each corner with enormous plumes of white feathers ; so that, large and lofty as was the apartment, this splendid erection was majestically conspicuous from every corner of it. On the right hand stood a range of gold and velvet chairs for the archducal knights ; which range continued below the dais, but, instead of chairs, consisted of benches inclosed by lists, covered with tapestry, for the other knights ; and opposite this was another row of seats of a similar description, that all of them might find place ; but in face of the archducal chairs a small altar was erected upon the dais, on which stood a silver crucifix between two lighted tapers, with a velvet *prie-Dieu* before it. Behind the place allotted to the archdukes another rich canopy covered a tribune, prepared for the Empress and the ladies and children of the imperial family ; and near it another enclosure for the ladies in waiting. Below these, on the same side, was a tribune for the corps diplomatique ; and opposite to them a gallery,

raised a few feet from the floor, for the ladies of the haute noblesse. The remainder of the room, amounting to about half of it, was flanked on both sides by galleries for the public, to whom tickets, which it required some interest to obtain, were distributed by the grand master to the number of about five hundred. At the bottom of the room, over the only door of entrance, is a gallery for music.

It was just half-past nine in the morning when we reached our places, and it was well-known that the ceremonies were not to begin till eleven ; nevertheless all the tribunes, excepting those reserved for the Empress and her ladies, were already filling fast. We got excellent places, however ; and the movement and the splendour of the gay crowd that occupied the floor, furnished very sufficient amusement till the solemnities began.

At length, a flourish of trumpets announced the approach of the court, and sent all the sabred, starred, and cordoned loiterers back in thick ranks against the galleries, leaving more space than a moment before seemed possible, for the entrance of those to look upon whom we were all assembled there.

The first person who stepped forward into the space thus cleared was the Empress of Austria, her tall and elegant figure shown to great advantage by a dress of black velvet, very richly ornamented about the front and shoulders by diamonds. A white hat and feathers, with a brilliant bandeau of

diamonds under it, formed her head-dress; and a rich blond scarf, thrown over her very graceful shoulders, prevented her dress from having so completely the air of an evening toilet as it would have had without it. She walked up the room quite alone, bowing very graciously to the tribunes, and to the throng of courtiers marshalled on both sides of her below them. This *singleness* has, perhaps, something of unapproachable dignity in it that is imposing; but I should have liked the thing better, if the arrangements had permitted some "prince or knight of high degree" to have led her to her place of honour; and I am sure there must have been dozens of chivalric hearts near her lamenting the necessity that so gracious an Empress and so fair a dame should win her way alone. With most "unblenched majesty," however, and with no faltering step, the imperial lady reached her seat. Then followed the tall and majestic Archduchess Sophia, consort of the Archduke Francis, leading her two little boys,—the eldest of them being presumptively "the hope of the fair state." Next to her came the Archduchess Clementina, Princess of Salerno, leading her fair little girl; and then the very pretty young Archduchess Maria Theresa, who in a few weeks is to become Queen of Naples.

The Prince of Salerno, and three young archdukes, followed, completing the party admitted to the tribune of the Empress. A white-plumed host of fair ladies followed, all I think in black velvet dresses.

Soon after they had taken their places, another flourish of trumpets was heard from the music gallery, and three very significant taps on the floor from some official baton again cleared the way, making the crowd, which appeared quite sufficient to fill the whole, shrink into about half the space.

Then entered the Emperor, in his robes as grand master of the order, and his cortège, consisting upon this occasion wholly of knights of the Golden Fleece, each followed by an elegant young page to bear his train; and a more splendid line it would be impossible to look upon. The whole procession, including the eleven new knights, were all attired in the rich robes of the order; while their collars and caps, radiant with jewels, formed altogether as imposing a spectacle as it is possible for draperies and decorations to produce.

We had been told that the robes worn at this solemnity were the identical dresses made for the investiture of the knights at the first chapter, held by Philippe le Bon at Bruges, in the year 1429. But this high antiquity does not belong to the dresses we saw this morning. We have, nevertheless, had the opportunity of passing judgment on these same original robes, as they make part of the curious museum of relics preserved in the Ritterbourg at Lachsenbourg. The robes now worn are comparatively modern, being, in fact, only one hundred and twenty-five years old; they were made when Charles the Sixth on arriving from Spain, on the

death of his brother Joseph the First, in 1711, restored to the house of Austria the exclusive privilege of bestowing this order.

We have certainly not improved, within the last century and a quarter, in the art of imagining or of fabricating a grave and princely dress for a grave and princely ceremony. No robes of modern days can compare with the gold and crimson waves that floated round these noble knights. Even the ermined robes of our peers must yield in dignity of outline to the draperies of the Golden Fleece. The material is crimson velvet, richly embroidered with gold, and lined with white satin; but it is in the majestic and flowing forms into which the robe and the cloak worn over it throw themselves, that the superiority consists. Had John Kemble seen an installation of knights of the Golden Fleece, he would most certainly have got up a piece to which the ceremony should have been incidental. He would have worn its robes and its cap too, so as to have done more justice to them than my pen can do. For the cap is by no means to be omitted in the history of this magnificent costume: it is of the same dark and massive material as the dress, with a singular drapery descending from it, that if suffered to fall to its full extent would reach the knees. It is in the management of this strange appendage to the head-dress that the greatest difference is perceptible in the bearing and deportment of the different individuals that constitute this noble body. The jewels,

it is true, with which all the caps are adorned, may differ both in brilliancy of arrangement and in intrinsic value; the same too may be said of the resplendent collars; but all this is overlooked and forgotten while the eye follows the easy dignity and grace of one, or the nervous puzzled awkwardness of another. I presume the knights of King Philip the Good were tall and stalwart heroes, who could wear armour as lightly as a shepherd's cloak; for most assuredly the dress provided for them requires a noble stature, and a graceful mien, to give it good effect.

Among those we saw to-day were many stately and graceful figures, who looked very much as if nature had prepared them for the place they held. The new knights were of course the gazed at of all eyes; and, fortunately for the perfect effect of the ceremony, the majority of them were tall and handsome men. Among these the princely Liechtenstein, the graceful handsome Adolphe of Schwartzenberg, and the stately dignified Hoyos, grand veneur to the Emperor, were among the most remarkable. The juvenile archdukes too, though both of them too young to have fully attained the firm dignity of manhood, sustained their massive and unwonted garments very gracefully.

When the Emperor had taken his station upon the throne, the eleven new knights placed themselves on the seats which were ranged on the left of it; and, after a short Latin formula had been read by one

of the officers of the court, they were led up one by one by Count Kolowrat ; Prince Metternich, whose place as senior knight it was to perform this part of the ceremony, being kept from attending by indisposition. Having reached the foot of the throne they kneeled down, and received three taps on the shoulder from the Emperor's sword, which must have descended to him, I think, from some of his portly Habsburg ancestors, for it is enormous. As each knight approached, the Emperor read from a golden-bound volume held before him a few words,—the name and title, I presume, of the new knight ; and, as soon as the sword had done its ennobling office, each one stepped backwards a few paces, and kneeling down before the crucifix pronounced his vow of fealty. This done, in the same order in which they had been knighted, the young archdukes coming first, they again approached the throne, and, kneeling before it, received from the hands of the Emperor the rich golden chain and decoration of the Golden Fleece, which the sovereign, aided by Count Kolowrat, threw over the neck of each. After receiving this, the kneeling knight bent forward and received a kiss on each cheek, and, as it seemed, one on the breast, from the Emperor ; and, then rising, proceeded along the line of seated knights, receiving two kisses from each of them.

This portion of the ceremony over, the trumpets again gave a flourish, the effective baton again thrice struck the ground, the crowd parted, and the

Emperor, followed by his resplendent train, left the hall.

Though I had previously been assured, that a banquet given to the knights made part of the day's ceremonies, and that all those who had received tickets were to witness it, I could hardly persuade myself that the business was still unfinished ; especially as, after the departure of the knights, the Empress rose, and again walking through the room alone, followed as before at some distance by the ladies of the imperial family, and the noble dames in attendance on them, left the apartment.

I was greatly disposed to go too ; but as the corps diplomatique remained, as the gentlemen who occupied the floor remained also, and as no one stirred in the other tribunes, I remained quiet too. In a few minutes, the manner in which the promised banquet was to appear before us was made manifest by the entrance of a crowd of liveried serving-men, some bearing tables, others benches ; some carrying arms-full of tapestry to envelope the rude material of both ; and others again conveying table-cloths and napkins, knives and spoons, glasses and plates ; so as to leave no room for doubting what the object was which set them all so busily in motion.

The scene was now certainly a most singular one ; the floor of the hall was still thronged with Austrian, Hungarian, and Bohemian nobles. Ambassadors from every court in Europe, with their families, still

occupied their tribune; and all the ladies of the highest class in Vienna, who were not on this day in personal attendance on the Empress, likewise remained in their places; yet the whole process of placing tables, and, in homely English phrase, of “laying the cloth for dinner,” went on before their eyes exactly in the same manner as if the domestics had been the only living beings in the apartment.

Meanwhile the court were, as we learnt, performing some religious office appertaining to the ceremony of installation in the chapel of the palace; and we employed the interval, as well as we could, in chatting with those around us, and in looking out upon others, who like ourselves were beguiling the idle time as they could. There was one witticism that, I think, made the entire tour of our tribune, which was suggested by the relative positions of three of the ambassadors who stood opposite to us, — namely, the Nuncio, the ambassador of Louis Philippe, and the ambassador of the Sublime Porte. The Comte de St. Aulaire stood between the Pope’s Nuncio and the Turk. “Voilà le juste milieu,” said some one; and “juste milieu” was echoed round, while every eye was bent in the same direction.

The preparations for the banquet meanwhile went busily on. A table for all of imperial blood was spread on the dais, and a larger one for the other knights stretched down the hall. Both were decorated very splendidly with gold plate, plateaux, and

flowers ; and, as soon as the operation was fully completed, the court, both male and female, entered anew, exactly in the same order as before, excepting that Prince Gustavus Vasa, the ex-Crown Prince of Sweden, accompanied the imperial ladies to their tribune, and remained there during the rest of the ceremony, standing by the Prince of Salerno.

The Emperor and his illustrious kindred placed themselves—in act to eat—at the high table ; but, though it was covered with all sorts of splendid dinner decorations, the business went no farther. Nothing eatable was set before them, and their share in this part of the ceremony was much the same as our own. The knights' table, on the contrary, was diligently served with the regular routine of dinner, from soup to ice ; but very little was eaten by any one. While the seeming feast continued, however, the music gallery was in full activity. Madlle. Löwe sang a bravura, which, either from the form of the room, or from some mistaken idea on her part that its great size demanded unusual exertion, was most painfully and oppressively loud. Another song was sung by a male performer, but not with very happy effect. This is not at present the *coté fort* of Vienna.

As soon as the mimicry of eating had been sufficiently gone through, the court arose, and made its exit, followed by the Empress and her ladies in the same stately order as before.

It is, I should conceive, impossible that any

ceremony of the kind could be more dignified, more magnificent, more stately, in all its features, than this installation. The order, one of the oldest and noblest in the world, is for many reasons full of historic interest; and before I witnessed the ceremony I took some pains to ascertain its origin, and the circumstances which led to its institution. While thus engaged, I found another proof of the difficulty attending the collecting facts, however well they may be established. Even here I got three distinct and totally different statements respecting the foundation of the institution. One person assured me, as from authority, that it took its rise from a *liaison par amours* between its founder and a belle Française. Another told me, what had certainly a much greater appearance of probability, that the order of the Golden Fleece was instituted by Philippe le Bon in the year 1430, in order to solemnize his intended expedition with the most distinguished of his courtiers to the Holy Land; and, though eventually this crusade never took place, the order had ever since been kept up, and considered as one of the noblest the hand of a monarch can bestow.

From my third informant, however, I received the copy of a document that leaves no farther room for uncertainty, namely, the original letter patent of the good King Philip. It may be found in Hippolyte Flelyet's History of Military and Religious Orders, chapter fourth. The letter begins thus :

“ Philippe, par la grace de Dieu, Duc de Bourgogne, de Lothier, de Brabant, de Limbourg, Comte de Flandres, d’Artois, de Bourgogne, Palatin de Hainault, de Holland, de Zélande, de Namur, Marquis du St. Empire, Seigneur de Tresî, de Saliers, et de Malines, sçavoir fesos à tous présens et avenir que, pour la très grande et parfaite amour, qu’avons au noble état de chevalier, dont de très ardente et singulière affection desirons l’honneur et l’agrandissement, par quoi la vraie foi Catholique, l’état de notre chere sainte Eglise, et la tranquillité et prospérité de la chose publique soyent, comme être peuvent, défendues, gardées, et maintenues, nous à la gloire et louange du tout puissant notre Créateur et Redempteur, en reverence de la glorieuse chere Vierge, et à l’honneur de Monseigneur Saint Andrieu glorieus apôtre et martyr, à l’exaltation de la foy et sainte Eglise et exaltation des vertus et bonnes mœurs, le dix du mois de Janvier de l’an de notre Seigneur 1429, qui fut le jour de la solennisation du mariage de nous et de notre très chere et aimée compagne Elisabeth en notre ville de Bruges, avons prius crée et ordonné, et par celles présentes créons et ordonnons de certaine nombre de chevaliers que voulons être appelée l’ordre de la Toison d’Or . . .”

This extract suffices to prove both the exact date, and the occasion of the institution, which was clearly for the purpose of rendering more solemn and magnificent the ceremony of his marriage.

The right of conferring the order was transferred to the house of Austria by Maximilian the First, and the chief of that house has ever since been its hereditary Grand Master: it was transferred for a short interval to Spain, but restored to Austria by Charles the Sixth; and is still considered as the highest and most honourable in Austria, as also, I believe, in most other Catholic countries. The military order of Maria Theresa ranks as second to it.

LETTER XL.

Catacombs. — Tremendous Exhibition. — Destruction of the Coffins.—Manner of Burying during the Plague.

1st December 1836.

IN singularly strong contrast to our occupation of yesterday, we have passed a part of this morning in the subterranean catacombs of St. Stephen's. A gentleman to whom we owe the advantage of having seen many things, which without his active kindness might have escaped our notice, proposed taking us thither; though, as he said, he knew not what the spectacle might be, as he had never visited these vaults himself. All he could tell us was, that they were extensive, had been during a vast number of years the receptacle for the dead of a large district, and had ceased to be used as such for the last half century.

My notion in accepting this invitation was, that I should see upon a smaller scale what I regretted having missed seeing while it was exhibited at Paris,—namely, a systematic and symmetrical packing away of a vast quantity of human remains, with

equal attention to the decency of interment and the necessary economy of space. But I was speedily made aware that this idea, too lightly conceived, and founded certainly on no good authority, was *tremendously* erroneous.

The present entrance to these vaults is by a small obscure door, situated amidst the houses behind the cathedral: it opens upon a small and sordid chamber, where two or three women were washing; which being traversed, we found ourselves in a paved court, or rather passage; in the same style of domestic use, and domestic dirt, having at the farther end of it another door, from which the steps into the catacombs descended. This obscure approach proved that what we were about to see was not often visited as a spectacle; and if we had drawn the rational inference from this, and concluded that we should find nothing which it was desirable to see, we might have escaped gazing upon the most horrible scene that could be exhibited to mortal eyes.

Instead of turning back, however, as I think we ought to have done, the demon of curiosity urged us forward; we descended the steps, and, each being provided with a lighted flambeau of wax, proceeded on our horrid expedition. Two men accompanied us, one preceding, the other following; they both counted the number of the party, and earnestly charged us to keep together. Our procession looked in some degree fitted to the scene, for the lights

we bore were of the form used at funeral solemnities, and had doubtless already been employed in such, for they were all in part consumed.

Having threaded a narrow passage of no great length, we turned at right-angles round the wall of it, and found ourselves at the top of another and much handsomer flight of steps. These latter were of stone, and neatly vaulted with the same material; the former were, I think, of wood, and could not have made part of the original construction. Where the former entrance might have been, I know not; but it is probably now blocked up; and that by which we approached, opened solely for the convenience of those whose ghastly business still leads them occasionally to these obsolete graves.

As we passed along the passage leading from this second flight of steps, I observed a very obscure glimmering of daylight far above our heads; and, on inquiring whence it came, was told that it proceeded from a grating in the church above, through which bodies had formerly been let down into the vaults. We continued our way for some time without encountering anything more terrific than what we naturally expected in vaults consecrated to the reception of a vast congeries of dead bodies; that is to say, we saw, first on one side of us, and then on the other, walls built up of human bones, of no great extent indeed, but arranged exactly in the manner represented in the engravings of the Parisian catacombs. And here the exhibition should

have ended, and doubtless was intended to do so, if indeed exhibition was ever intended at all.

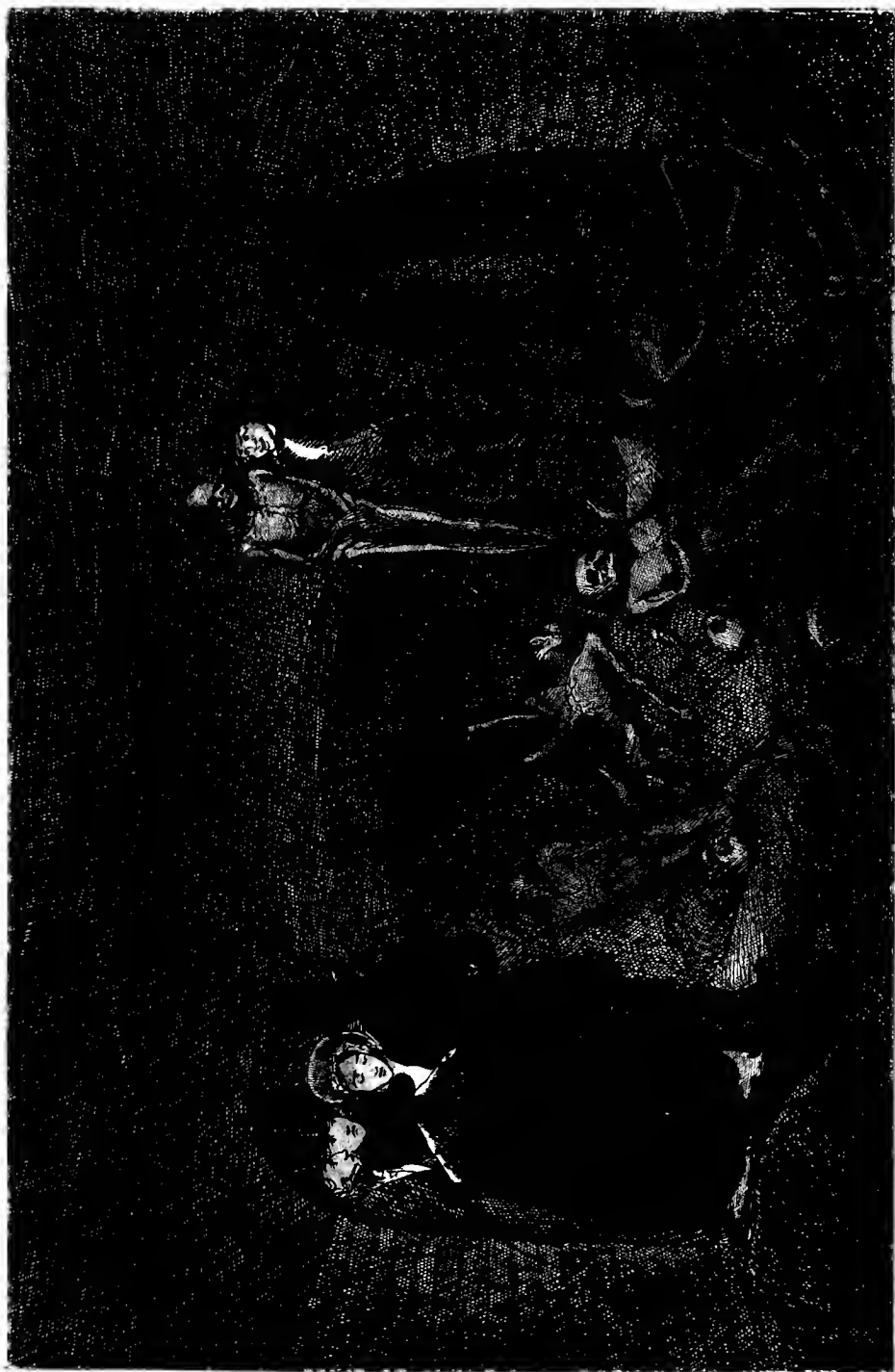
But the man who led the party walked on, and on we all walked after him. And now the scene changed: this semblance of order, and of something like reverence for the human relics collected there, disappeared altogether, and such a scene greeted us as will probably visit my dreams at intervals as long as I live. We reached a large square vault, in which our conductor paused; and, holding low the light he carried, showed us, stretched in horrible disorder on the ground,—which was rugged and uneven with huge masses of obscene decay,—a multitude of wholly naked and uncoffined bodies, in every attitude that accident could produce.

From some peculiarity of atmosphere, probably its singular and very remarkable deficiency of moisture, the decomposition which usually follows death has not taken place here; but, instead of this, the skin is dried to the substance of thick leather; while the form, and in a multitude of cases the features also, remain just sufficiently unchanged in shape, to make their grinning likeness to ourselves the most striking, and the most appalling possible. The varied postures, and the different expression of each ghastly head, made them all seem to live in death; and I trembled as I looked at them, lest, as Juliet says,—that I might go distraught,

Environed with all those hideous sights,
And madly play with the long-buried bones.

Such a spectacle, and the careless confusion in which the horrible objects that composed it were strewed about, was in truth enough to make a woman's step falter and her senses reel; yet this was but the beginning of horrors. Having allowed us time to look around, and take in at one general view the whole sickening scene, our conductor stooped, and seizing one of these lamentable epitomes of a human being by the throat, raised him before our eyes, and made him stand upright to be gazed upon, manœuvring his flambeau the while so as to make the grim figure more distinctly visible, and descanting, as he did so, on his height and goodly proportions. Then, suddenly letting the rattling carcass fall at our feet, he caught up another,—told us it was a woman; then threw her aside, and raised a third, and, while supporting it against his own body with the same hand in which he held the light, he tore off with the other long strips of the dry skin to show how tough it was.

Had I been left in clearer possession of my judgment, I should surely have insisted upon turning back again, and regaining with all the strength left me the blessed sight of day and human life; but I felt sick, horror-struck, and utterly bewildered, and followed the party (which consisted besides ourselves of three or four gentlemen who were strangers to us) without uttering a word. C— and I occasionally exchanged a silent pressure of the hand, but any other interchange of feeling seemed impossible.



Scene and Set by A. Hervieu.

I cannot tell you accurately how many of these horrid caverns we passed through ; but I know that I saw bats nestling against the walls, and human carcasses innumerable with open mouths grinning at me as I passed.

At one point, a broad flight of steps, well arched over and handsomely paved, were pointed out to us as leading up to the archiepiscopal palace, which is situated in St. Stephen's Platz. Why this connexion should exist between the residence of the archbishop and this horrible charnel-house I cannot imagine.

At length we reached another vault, larger than any of the preceding ones, on the farther side of which a heap uncountable of human bodies, seemingly thrown together like so many masses of rubbish, rose half-way up the wall. The surface of this horrible accumulation, as well as the entire floor, was strewed with carcasses, with heads and limbs still hanging to them, in better or worse preservation according to the accidents of attitude and position in which they were thrown. Among the most perfect of these our loathsome guide again employed himself, raising them in horrible display before our eyes, and patting, pulling, and jocosely handling their gaunt forms in a spirit of pleasantry that brought the hideous frolics of Petit André vividly before me. It made me feel, even in the half-reasoning state in which I then was, that the great master had not exaggerated the degree in which it was possible natural feeling might be conquered in

the human heart, by long familiarity with objects most calculated to excite it, but which appear likewise to have the power of exhausting and quenching it,—as if the nerves worn out could feel no more.

At one spot in particular this man continued to linger, evidently in search of some especial object, and at last broke forth into an exclamation upon his ill-success—“ *Es war ein schön mann hier . . . Wo ist er dann?*” but still he proceeded with unholy perseverance to seek for the identical corse he wished to exhibit, tossing one this way and another that, in his search, till he found it; then, placing its lank enormous height beside his own, he chuckled as he watched the shuddering disgust with which we turned from him.

The next halt was beside a dark round pit, that looked like a bricked well of extraordinarily large dimensions. Here again our gowle conductor held his taper low, that we might see all we had so unadvisedly come to see.

“Here,” he said, pointing his finger downwards,—“here in this pit lie thousands, and thousands more. It goes deep, deep, deep!”

Up, nearly to the edge of this dark abyss, rose another mass of dried, rather than of corrupted mortality; and more legs, more arms, more grinning skulls, more shrivelled carcasses, half leather and half bone, met our eyes; while the fragments of broken limbs scattered on the margin of this horrible pit showed plainly enough that when the excess of

bodies in the vaults made it necessary to sink a new gulph to receive them, the manner in which the mortal relics were finally deposited was not very reverential.

But decidedly the most horrid spot of all was a vault which had been divided by a brick wall, apparently of less substantial masonry than the rest of the buildings. For many years, our conductor told us, the vault thus divided off had received a multitude of confined corpses cast into it from above ; but at length the weight against the new side-wall became so great that it gave way ; and the same hateful flambeau that had been so repeatedly flourished before us, was now very skilfully used to show the yawning chasm through which had fallen, into the vault where we stood, some scores of coffins, which, bursting open as they fell, cast out their ghastly inmates, one tumbling head over heels upon another in such hideous and abhorrent confusion as makes the blood cold to remember.

Many of these gaping coffins hang hitched and suspended in their fall ; and I could not but fancy that if any among us moved too suddenly, or even shook the air by speaking aloud, another horrid avalanche might fall through the same opening, and overwhelm us in its rattling mass.

This last scene seemed to be the *coup de théâtre* of this most revolting, indecent, unnatural, and impious exhibition ; for, by some sudden turn amidst the labyrinth of passages that surrounded us, we soon

regained the steps by which we had descended, and another minute or two brought us once more to the blessed light of day.

Just twenty-four hours before we entered this horrible museum of death, we had been looking, as my letter of yesterday told you, upon a scene of the most brilliant and most stately pomp that the earth can show. It was an awful practical sermon upon the evanescent nature of human greatness and of mortal splendour; but it was too much like the terrible desolating discourses of some of our threatening sectarians, who try to make terror do the work of piety. I returned from it, perhaps, more shocked than edified, and by no means feel disposed to recommend the lesson to any of my fellow-creatures.

We had not been many minutes returned to the human consolations of our own drawing-room, when I observed Mr. H— in deep whispering consultation with my son and Mr. B—; the result of which was, that they should all three immediately set off again, and endeavour, by means of an additional fee, to induce the jocose showman of death, whom we had just quitted, to lead them again into the presence of the *schön mann*, for the purpose of making a sketch of him, and of the scene in which we had beheld his terrific beauty.

It was certainly with the most unfeigned astonishment that we saw them depart; but depart they did, and in rather less than an hour returned with a drawing which, spite of the darkness visible in which

it was made, gives a very accurate representation of the hateful spectacle.

They assured us that the man to whom we had all taken so decided an aversion, had only assumed the light tone which had so deeply shocked us as a part of the trade by which he gained his bread ; for when he attended them to the vaults, not as a show-man, but merely as one who was to be paid for opening the door and procuring lights, he seemed quite as little disposed to jest as they were themselves. Poor wretch ! It is a horrible trade, and it is to be regretted that any should be permitted to exercise it.

It is, I own, a matter of unmixed astonishment to me, that this frightful and most indecent exhibition should be permitted in a city so well regulated as Vienna. If such a spectacle had been offered, or permitted to the public in Paris, during the period of Robespierre's power and legislation, it would have been quite in the natural order of things : but here, where a sort of watchful protecting wisdom seems for ever at work to guard morally and physically the well-being of the people, it is quite inexplicable ; unless, indeed, the fact be, that the exhibition is neither licensed nor known, and that the person who has the charge of the keys conceives that he does no harm in occasionally using them for the sake of obtaining a few florins.

By what means we were admitted, whether by a ticket from any authority, or merely by an application made to this man, I know not. The gentleman

who took us had never before been in the catacombs himself, and really seemed quite as much shocked and disgusted as ourselves.

A Vienna gentleman of our acquaintance happening to call upon us this evening, I mentioned our dreadful expedition to him on purpose to hear his opinion on the subject.

He seemed rather surprised to hear that we had got in, saying that he did not know any admittance was allowed ; but, in reply to my observations on the promiscuous manner in which the bodies were thrown together without coffins, he said that doubtless the coffins had all been burnt for fire-wood.

“ And who can have obtained permission,” said I, “ to commit this profanation ?”

“ The person who has the key of the vaults, I presume,” was the answer.

“ And is he then permitted to enter these vaults at will, and carry off the coffins ?” I asked.

“ Mais assurément !” said he, in an accent of astonishment at my doubts : adding, “ we do not at all share in your *superstitious* feelings respecting dead bodies.”

He confirmed the information we had before received, respecting the length of time that had elapsed since the vaults had been used as a sepulchre, stating that it was rather more than sixty years.

He mentioned likewise that there were several other places at no great distance, where the dryness

of the atmosphere produced the same effect in preventing the decomposition of dead bodies.

He accounted for the vast number of uncoffined bodies found lying in heaps together by saying, that when the plague raged in Vienna, in the year 1713, nearly ten thousand persons perished, and that a large proportion of them were buried in the vaults of St. Stephen's, into which they were probably thrown with more haste than ceremony.

Had I heard this before my subterranean visit of this morning, the spectacle would, I think, have inspired terror as well as disgust, notwithstanding the one hundred and twenty-three years that have elapsed since the visitation. Not the slightest smell or want of fresh air, however, was perceptible in any part of the catacombs.

LETTER XLI.

The Duc de Reichstadt.—The conduct pursued by the Emperor Francis towards him.—Congress of Vienna.—Position of Maria Louisa.—Her presence in a concealed Situation at one of the Fêtes. — Anecdotes of the Duc de Reichstadt and his Grandfather.—Secret Proposals from France in 1830.—Prince Metternich's Reply to them.—The Character and Sentiments of the Duke.—The Inscription upon his Coffin.

December 4th, 1836.

AMONG the many things that I have found unlike what I expected at Vienna, few have struck me more than the particulars which I have learnt respecting the Duc de Reichstadt ; nor can there be a stronger proof of our very profound ignorance of what is going on here, than the many erroneous notions that have been entertained among us relative to his position at the court of his grandfather.

From the hour that the uncrowned little King of Rome was placed by Maria Louisa in the arms of her father, on the steps of the palace at Rambouillet, the Emperor of Austria seems, with the judgment, rectitude, and tenderness that made up his

character, to have decided what place the son of Napoleon might hold in the empire, and what place the son of his daughter should hold in his heart.

From the conduct dictated by this decision he never swerved, though it may be that the uncommonly attractive talents and fine qualities of the boy might eventually have rendered him of more importance to the domestic happiness of the Emperor than could have been at first contemplated.

The residence of the mother and child was fixed at Schönbrunn, the very palace in which, five short years before, the all-conquering Napoleon had established his head-quarters, and dictated thence the tremendous terms of his offered peace and alliance to the imperial house of Austria. We all know how these terms were kept by him who offered them. La Fontaine, long ago, gave a hint on this subject, as well as on most others, that might have been profitably taken—

S'assure-t-on de l'alliance qu'a faite la nécessité ?

And now the son of him who had first dared to propose such terms, and again to disturb the peace they promised at such an awful price, was thrown into the bosom of the potentate so every way injured. To ordinary minds there would have been something exceedingly embarrassing in such a charge. What, in truth, could more accurately answer to the expressive phrase—*une fausse position*, than the residence of the son of the arch-usurper of half the

thrones in Europe at the court of the Emperor of Austria in the character of his grandson ?

But the mind of Francis of Austria had nothing ordinary in it. By simply, and without a shadow of mystery, acting as his conscience and his judgment told him he ought to act, he avoided all the difficulties which appeared to lie in his path.

How often have I heard it said in England, some dozen years ago, "What in the world can Austria do with him?" Nor do I remember ever to have listened to any very satisfactory answer to the question; but since I have been here, and particularly since I have read M. de Montbel's simple but eloquent Memoir of the Duc de Reichstadt's short but happy life, it is plain enough to me that, had we possessed much real knowledge of the then Emperor of Austria's character, it would have been a question of no difficulty at all.

The explanation of the system he pursued may be given by the single word TRUTH. It was founded upon truth, and sustained by truth. No political *arrière pensée* ever mixed itself with the counsels which decided the destiny of the strangely-fortuned boy. There was the faith of a sovereign to keep with Europe, and there was the faith of a father to keep with a child who, like a second Iphigenia, had been offered upon the altar to ensure the safety of his people,—and to both he kept it; while by a justness and uniformity of acting and thinking, seldom seen in the tortuous affairs of human life, the impe-

rially-descended son of an adventurer was gently, yet frankly, made to understand his unparalleled position; so that the consciousness of it grew with his strength, without ever having at any moment been permitted to sting him by his finding that there was yet something more to learn concerning it. The only expression of his regrets that I have heard recorded, was uttered on his journey from Rambouillet to Schönbrunn, when, missing his usual companions, he exclaimed, "Je n'ai plus de pages!"...

The reception of the restored archduchess by the people, from the moment she re-entered Austria, was enthusiastically affectionate; and the welcome which she and her throneless child received from the illustrious race assembled to meet them at Schönbrunn, certainly more than justifies her submitting herself and him to the gentle will of her imperial father, instead of exposing both to unknown difficulties in defiance of it. If she were but Napoleon's widow still! But this has nothing to do with the Duc de Reichstadt.

It would be difficult, I think, for the most able romancer to imagine a situation combining materials for a stranger variety of feelings than that of Maria Louisa during the celebrated Congress of Vienna. Affectionately cherished in her own person and that of her son by every member of her family, she was nevertheless doomed to see them consecrating every day that passed by some fête given in jubilee of the downfall of him to whom she had been wife,—the

father of her boy, the source and spring of all her own short-lived, but almost unequalled greatness.

The well-known fact, that, on one occasion, the ex-Empress of France felt more curiosity than repugnance at the idea of witnessing the brilliant pomp of these triumphant European réunions, lessens the surprise at her subsequent conduct. In a curtained gallery of the same hall which, four years before, had witnessed the august ceremony of her *fiançailles* with Napoleon, the Duchess of Parma concealed herself, in order to behold one of the fêtes at which the constellation of sovereigns were assembled to celebrate his downfall. Amongst the distinguished individuals on that occasion submitted to her observation was Eugène Beauharnois, Duc de Leuchtenberg, and son to the sometime Empress Josephine.

In the year 1818, after the question relative to the succession of the young Napoleon to the Duchies of Parma, Plaisance, and Guastella, had been decided against him, the Emperor Francis definitively settled the rank and station which he was in future to hold.

“We give,” said this act, “to Prince Francis Joseph Charles, son to our well-beloved daughter the Archduchess Maria Louisa, the title of Duke de Reichstadt.” The same act regulated his armorial bearings, and directed that henceforth he should take rank throughout the Austrian empire immediately after the archdukes of the imperial family. Estates in Bohemia, of the yearly value of 500,000

franks (about £20,000 per annum), were secured to him after the death of his mother, who was to supply his expenses, while she lived, from the revenues of the territory that had been settled upon her for her life. Soon after all this business was arranged, Maria Louisa left Vienna for Parma, where she has ever since resided.

Whether it was then, or at a later period of her history, that she parted with the unvalued bauble, I know not ; but I have seen in the possession of an individual at Vienna the exquisitely-finished miniature of Napoleon, which he sent as the bridal present for the ceremony of their espousals at Vienna. The silver setting of prodigiously large diamonds still remains round it ; and at the back, upon a morsel of the red cordon of the Legion of Honour, is a small lock of his raven hair.

From the period of his mother's departure, the young François Joseph Charles (the name of Napoleon being sunk for ever as an offering to the peace of Europe) became not only the inmate of the Emperor's residence, but by far the most constant companion of his leisure. From the account given in M. de Montbel's delightful volume, and also from what I have learnt from *vivâ voce* accounts of the highest authority, the conversations between the Duc de Reichstadt and his grandfather were from the very first of the most frank and unreserved nature. One of these, of a very early date, shows admirably their tone.

“ Is it true, grandpapa,” said the child, “ that when I was at Paris I had pages ?”

“ Yes, I think you had pages.”

“ Is it not true, too, that I was called the King of Rome ?”

“ Yes, they called you King of Rome.”

“ What is being King of Rome, grandpapa ?”

“ When you are older, my dear child,” said the Emperor, “ I shall be able to explain it to you better. All I can tell you now is, that, besides being Emperor of Austria, I am called King of Jerusalem, without my having anything at all to do with Jerusalem. . . . Well, then, you were King of Rome just as I am King of Jerusalem.”

The boy appeared to ponder over this answer long, but he said no more about it.

When the court left Vienna during the summer months for the country, the Emperor and the young Duke de Reichstadt became quite inseparable. They always ate together ; and, when the Emperor declared it to be his intention to dine alone, it was always understood that this order was not intended to exclude the young duke.

When about five years of age, it is recorded of him, that M. Hummel, a French artist employed to take his portrait, arrived in his apartments when he was exceedingly busy in exercising a platoon of wooden soldiers. The artist, in order to draw the child's attention to him, began talking of the toys.

“ I wish I were a soldier !” said the son of Na-

poleon ; “ I would fight well—I would mount to the assault !”

“ But you would find bayonets, monseigneur, that would beat you back and perhaps kill you.”

“ Should not I have a sword to keep them off ?” he replied proudly.

When this portrait was nearly finished, the artist applied to Count Maurice Dietrichstein, the child’s governor, to know with what order he should decorate the little prince.

“ With the order of St. Stephen, which the Emperor sent him in his cradle,” said the Count.

“ But I had a great many more, M. le Comte,” said the boy.

“ Yes,” answered the Count ; “ but you do not wear them now.”

This answer silenced him.

When Sir Thomas Lawrence was at Vienna, in the year 1819, the Persian minister, Abul Hassan, who had known him in London, paid him a visit ; and the young Duc de Reichstadt, wishing to see the stranger, was taken to Sir Thomas’s apartments at the time he was expected there.

The Persian entered, and was presented to the young duke, but immediately began conversing in English with much vivacity with Count Dietrichstein. Struck by his noisy and uncereemonious manner, the Duc de Reichstadt, then only eight years old, said very gravely—

“ Voilà un Persan bien vif ; il me paraît que

ma présence ne lui cause pas le plus léger embarras."

The memoir of M. de Montbel is full of anecdotes of this kind, and there is scarcely one of them that I have not heard repeated by those who were in the daily habit of seeing this most interesting child. The developement of his fine faculties appears to have been not only rapid, but continued, even to the last hour of his short existence ; and, in reading the pages of his animated historian, it is impossible not to be struck by the ardent temperament, the burning ambition for military fame, and the remarkable faculty of looking into the minds of men, which he so clearly inherited from his father. But happily, the system of education by which he was, as it were, surrounded on all sides, prevented these powerful propensities from preying on the moral sense : happily, most happily, the noble boy died, while the bright spirit that glowed within him was still undimmed by the foul exhalations such spirits are sure to draw from earth.

Short, however, as was his mortal career, it was not altogether free from temptation, and that, too, exactly of the kind most likely to beset him with success ; but the guardian care of those who loved him well, was near to save him, and he died, innocent of the blood of thousands, which a less righteous line of conduct would have caused to flow. In speaking of the French Revolution of 1830, M. de Montbel has the following passage :

“ A peu près à l’époque de mon arrivée à Vienne,* y vint aussi un personnage dont le nom célèbre dans les fastes de la révolution et de l’empire est mêlé à toutes les époques de l’histoire de nos convulsions politiques, et qui, redoutable à tous les partis, fut souvent invoqué par eux à cause de l’habileté qu’on reconnaissait à celui qui le portait alors. Cet homme venait, chargé de faire des propositions positives en faveur du Duc de Reichstadt, mais sous le voile d’une toute autre mission. Ses communications furent écoutées, mais avec un calme froid qui déconcerta ses projets : il s’éloigna peu de tems après. De nombreuses tentatives se succédèrent dans le but de faire paraître le jeune duc, soit en France, soit en Italie : quelques-unes des propositions furent développées avec suite ; elles étaient soutenues d’exposés circonstanciés sur la composition du parti, son but, ses ressources, ses moyens d’exécution.

* * * * *

“ Ses propositions motivées, cette constitution formelle, furent présentées au Prince de Metternich pour lui prouver qu’on voulait faire du gouvernement, et non de la doctrine ; il n’entra pas dans la discussion des moyens, il se contenta de dire : ‘ Que demandez-vous, et qu’attendez-vous de nous ?’

“ ‘ Que vous nous laissiez conduire le Duc de Reichstadt à la frontière de France : sa présence, le nom magique de Napoleon renverseront en un instant

* M. de Montbel was Minister of the Interior under Charles dix.

le frêle édifice qui pèse en chancelant sur notre patrie, et qui sans cesse nous menace de ses ruines.’

“ ‘ Quelle garantie aura le Duc de Reichstadt de son avenir ? ’

“ ‘ L’amour et le courage des Français l’entoureront, et formeront un rampart autour de lui.’

“ ‘ Au bout de six mois il se trouverait entouré d’ambitions, d’exigences, de ressentimens, de haines, de conspirations ; il se trouverait au bord d’un abîme. Je vous l’ai déjà dit,—l’Empereur tient trop à ses principes et à ses devoirs envers ses peuples, aussi bien qu’au bonheur de son petit-fils, pour jamais se prêter à de semblables propositions. Du reste, vous vous abusez entièrement sur l’issue de votre entreprise, ou plutôt sur la durée de ses résultats. *Faire du Bonapartisme sans Bonaparte est une idée absolument fausse.*’ ”

Such an answer as this, to proposals which to many statesmen would have appeared to open a career of almost unbounded ambition for the country with which he was identified, fully justifies an assertion which I heard made the other day by one who knew well and technically the subject of which he spoke.

“ The archives of our state policy,” said he, “ might be opened to all the world. There is not a document among them but would do us honour.”

The Duc de Reichstadt, although perfectly satisfied (and apparently upon conviction of its wisdom and rectitude) with this decision, was, never-

thelèss, strongly moved by the political agitations of this period. His first words, on hearing the events that had taken place at Paris, were,—“ Je voudrais que l'Empereur me permît de marcher avec ses troupes au secours du Roi Charles dix.”

Every feeling and every sentiment recorded of him—and many such are fondly cherished in the memory of all who knew him—bear marks of great elevation and dignity of character ; but many of them bear also unequivocal testimony to a spirit that, in its maturity, would never have endured repose.

It is impossible to question, for a moment, the propriety of the line of conduct so uniformly pursued by the Emperor Francis relative to the perfect and entire information afforded to the Duc de Reichstadt respecting everything which concerned the life and times of his extraordinary father. At the age of fifteen every publication on this vast subject was put into his hands by the Count Dietrichstein ; and it is impossible but that they must, beyond all else, have occupied and interested his mind. This must of necessity have tended, in a great degree, to the engendering that vehement desire of fame, which, had he lived, could hardly have failed to prove hostile to his happiness. But there was no alternative, except the paltry and vain attempt to keep him in ignorance of that which, far more than any other subject, he was sure eventually to become acquainted with.

There is great reason, however, to believe that, although his father's career may have stirred his love of fame, its lawless ambition in no degree vitiated either the clearness of his judgment or the rectitude of his principles. Several well authenticated anecdotes of his short life go to prove this. On one occasion, for example, during a conversation between this lamented young man and the Maréchal Marmont, relative to Napoleon, the maréchal referred to a conversation held many years before, between himself and his great leader, as to the comparative moral value of a man of conscience, and a man of honour. "The Emperor Napoleon," said the maréchal, "gave the preference to the man of honour."

"And I," said the young duke, "decidedly give it to the man of conscience. The foundation of such a character is real and solid, and rests upon principles wholly independent of human passions."

During his last long lingering illness he frequently conversed with his physician, the learned and celebrated Dr. Malfatti, on subjects of literature. One day, when he was speaking with great enthusiasm of the poetry of Byron, the doctor replied by acknowledging the great power of the English bard, but lamented the manner in which he had often permitted doctrines of doubt, and even of despair, to turn his mind from the only source of hope and consolation. "Combien est supérieur," continued Malfatti, "l'être humain, tel que le conçoit Lamar-

tine, dans l'épître qu'il a adressée à Byron lui-même,—

Borné dans sa nature, infini dans ses vœux,
L'homme est un dieu tombé, qui se souvient des cieux."

"That is a grand and noble thought!" exclaimed the poor invalid; "I wish I were acquainted with the poetry of Lamartine!"

Dr. Malfatti immediately sent him the volumes; and, when he repeated his visit on the following morning, he was received by the young prince with expressions of eager gratitude. "I have read again and again," he said, "Lamartine's fine meditation; let us read it together."

The Duc de Reichstadt took the volume, and read aloud; but in pronouncing these lines,

Courage, enfant déchu d'une race divine!
Tu portes sur ton front ta céleste origine.
Tout homme, en te voyant, reconnaît dans tes yeux
Un rayon éclipsé de la splendeur des cieux.

his voice faltered: "they seemed," as Malfatti says, in his account of the scene given to M. de Montbel, from whose volume I have taken the anecdote, "to be addressed by the poet to himself."

All the details given of the last scenes of this short but interesting life by M. de Montbel, and a multitude of anecdotes besides, still freshly remembered by many, are full of pathos, and of the deepest historic interest. But I have already pil-

laged from this admirable volume too largely, and I can only add my earnest recommendation that you should read it yourself without delay. I have, however, said so much of this last fair fleeting relic of Napoleon's greatest triumph,—his union with the house of Austria,—that I am tempted to conclude by transcribing the inscription upon his coffin, which reposes in the imperial catacombs under the Capucin convent.

Æternæ . Memorix .
 Jos . Car . Francisci . Ducis . Reichstadiensis .
 Napoleonis . Gall . Imperatoris .
 et .
 Mar . Ludovicæ . Arch . Austr .
 Filii .
 Nati . Parisiis . 20 . Mart . 1811 .
 In . Cunabulis .
 Regis . Romæ . Nomine . Salutati .
 Ætate . Omnibus . Ingenii . Corporisque .
 Dotibus . Florentem .
 Procera . Statura . Vultu . Juveniliter . Decoro .
 Singulari . Sermonis . Comitatus .
 Militaribus . Studiis . et . Laboribus .
 Mire . Intentum .
 Phthisis . Tentavit .
 Tristissima . Mors . Rapuit .
 In . Suburbano . Augustorum . Ad . Pulchrum . Fontem .
 Prope . Vindobonam .
 22 . Julii . 1832 .

I have three reasons, which I hold to be good ones, for having transcribed this memorial.

First, it is beautiful ;

Secondly, it is true ; and,

Thirdly, (like all the other true and beautiful things belonging to Austria,) it has not been made to take the tour of every *cabaret* in Europe.

LETTER XLII.

The Opera.—Don Giovanni.—Thalberg.—Paganini.—The Piano and Violin compared.—Vieuxtemps.—Bourgeoise Aristocracy.—The Bankers of Vienna.—Their Position and remarkable Disabilities.—The Privileges of Strangers.—A Party.

December 12th, 1836.

AGAIN I have been at the Opera ; and, unless they get some vocal recruits, I think it will be the last time. I had, in truth, almost made the same resolution before ; but the announcement of Don Giovanni made us hope against our better knowledge ; and with heads filled by a silly sort of fancy that Don Giovanni must be Don Giovanni everywhere, we once again ventured to face the drop-curtain of Apollo and the Nine. But instead of the matter being better because the murdered airs were those of Mozart, it was—as we might have guessed it would be—incomparably worse. Oh ! the Zirlinas of my youth ! . . . Are they all “vocal no more ?” One advantage I have certainly gained by this unsuccessful experiment ; namely, the conviction that the memory of what was excellent is in itself

a positive present good; and that it is wise to avoid mixing delightful old visions with disagreeable new ones. So for the future I shall keep my magazine of old musical recollections unadulterated; and if I must listen to music in these degenerate days—in places where voices are not—it shall be music that I never heard before.

We have also been at a concert given by Thalberg, the celebrated pianiste. His fame is already too well established, both in London and Paris, for me to add to it. He certainly does more upon the pianoforte than ever mortal man did before him; and the Parisian caricature that represents him with ten fingers on each hand, is in fact a compliment as just as it is ingenious.

But, while lost in wonder at his extraordinary performance, I became convinced that the pianoforte is not, like the violin, an instrument to whose power of expression there is no limit. Bright and sparkling as may be the harmony it produces under such a hand as Thalberg's, its combinations may be rendered too intricate; and if what the French expressively call *le chant* be lost sight of, the legitimate use of the instrument is lost too.

Even in listening to the almost supernatural performance of Paganini, my ear has often longed to disentangle the air from the *feu d'artifice* that encumbered it; but, nevertheless, every note that it was his will to produce, was a fresh proof that the instrument in his hands could speak a language

that it never spoke before. His power of execution only seemed commensurate with the inventive spirit of harmony within him; no tone, or succession of tones, that his rich imagination could conceive, but the docile instrument had power to render under his magic touch. But not so the pianoforte, whose ready-made notes can only charm by the learned and skilful manner in which they are made to utter melody, and can never create new and undreamed of sounds, let the execution of the performer be what it will. Had Thalberg never heard Paganini play, he would probably have been the most perfect performer on the pianoforte that ever existed; but he must now, I think, take care that his ambition does not run away with his judgment, lest he push his Pegasus beyond its strength, and find it break down under him. The room in which this concert was given was crowded to excess, and I never heard acclamations more cordial and enthusiastic than those bestowed on the performance of this admirable artiste.

Since this concert I have had the pleasure of hearing him in private, and the wonderful perfection of his execution was even more apparent than it had been in the larger room. He certainly does use his fingers, as fingers were never used before. But Thalberg, great though he be, was not the only musical attraction at the party where I met him. A young man, almost a boy, of the name of Vieuxtems, performed a concerto of his own composition

upon the violin, in a style that gives promise, if I mistake not, of very great and excelling mastery in his profession. In speaking of this first of instruments, it is better for the interest of the science to forget Paganini and his miracles; and this done, I should say that young Vieuxtems promises to be a most delightful acquisition to the orchestras of Europe. He has taste, feeling, and imagination; and his execution is already distinguished both by delicacy and power. I hope that at some future day he will pay London a visit. The house where we enjoyed this double treat is one of the first among the Bourgeoise aristocracy of Vienna. This is a class so singularly apart from all above, and all below it, that, while attempting to give you a picture of Vienna, I must quite fail of making it recognisable as a likeness, if I omitted to describe the distinct and separate existence of this very wealthy portion of its citizens.

Neither in London nor in Paris is there anything in the least degree analogous to the station which the bankers of Vienna hold in its society. Their wealth as a body is enormous, and, therefore, as a body they are, and must be, of very considerable influence and importance in the state. Individually, too, their wealth is such, as in many instances to make their manner of living approach in expense very nearly to that of the highest nobles in the empire. Moreover, some few among them have by purchase ennobled their families by a title. I believe

there are four of the principal persons of this class who are privileged to prefix the title of Baron to their names. And yet with all this,—with title, fortune, influence, and a magnificent style of living,—the bankers are as uniformly unadmitted and unadmissible in the higher circles, as if they had continued as primitively unpretending in station as their goldsmith progenitors.

That it should be otherwise in a commercial country such as England is, and such as France is rapidly becoming, is nowise astonishing ; neither can we, perhaps, be reasonably surprised that here it should be as it is. But, though everybody may be ready to allow this on reflection, the effect of the arrangement to a stranger is not the less remarkable. To a stranger only can this *effect* be perceptible at all, for none other can be in a position that shall enable them to pass freely from one set to the other, without committing any treason to either. I sometimes think that we hold a station a little approaching to that of “*le diable boiteux*,”—being enabled to look over many objects from a point of view to which there is no access but for ourselves.

Nevertheless, and notwithstanding this great and manifest advantage of position, I by no means feel myself capable as yet of doing justice to the mysterious subject ; if our acquaintance in both directions goes on increasing as rapidly as it seems likely to do, I may be able before the end of the winter to discourse with the wisdom of an oracle upon it. Mean-

time, I can only describe things up and down, ça et là, exactly as I find them ; and it may be that, by my pursuing this system, your mind shall gradually become so enlightened as to enable you to understand the matter quite as well as myself.

To begin, then, with the gay party at which we heard the performances of MM. Thalberg and Vieuxtemps. It was at the house of Madame la Baronne E——, and the whole thing was in very good style. The apartment she occupies has been recently fitted up ; and it is certain that M. le Baron has spared no expense, and Madame la Baronne no trouble, to render the rooms elegant. They really are so ; and though I shall never, perhaps, overcome the native feeling which makes me consider any suite of rooms, however splendid, if they make part of another person's house, as a less aristocratic residence than much inferior apartments in a mansion wholly one's own, it is impossible not to allow that in this instance, as well as in many others, the Bourgeoise aristocracy of Vienna is “*parfaitement bien logée* ;” a phrase which on this occasion I prefer to any other, because it was precisely what I heard used by many of the company, when addressing the lady on the subject of her new abode—“*Vous êtes parfaitement bien logée — mais parfaitement !*” were words very frequently repeated on that evening. And the words were true. A handsome entrance, or ante-room ; a fine *salle* either for dancing or music, with polished walls of white stucco reflecting to advan-

tage the multitude of bougies that hung suspended in magnificent chandeliers of or-molu from the ceiling ; a suite of very well-furnished rooms, consisting, I think, of three drawing-rooms, la Baronne's bed-chamber, with its elegant chintz hangings, and le Baron's dressing-room, with its rich toilet of silver, and its splendid magazine of pipes, were all, I think, that we entered ; but these were quite sufficiently to justify the reiterated compliment—" Vous êtes parfaitement bien logées—mais parfaitement !"

The company were exceedingly well-dressed, and many, of what we should call in England very fine, diamonds reflected the abounding lights ; but on this point a very few entrées among "*la haute volée*" is quite sufficient to make one give oneself prodigious airs. The law of *majorat*, which protects their jewels as strictly as their castles, makes the hereditary diamonds of Austria outshine those of the whole world : but some of the pearls which I saw on this occasion can, I am sure, be excelled nowhere. One lady, a very charming person, who was one of my first acquaintance here, had on a necklace of pearls that cost twenty thousand pounds sterling. This one fact is quite sufficient to show, that the wealth found among this class would be elsewhere sufficient to obliterate almost any defects in pedigree, at least as far as the mere superficial intercourse of society goes ;—but in Austria it is otherwise.

Au reste—the music, as I have told you, was very

good, and the party very much like other parties ; except, perhaps, that the fair mistress, who is by the way extremely handsome, was infinitely more full-dressed than anybody else, — a pre-eminence which it is not, I think, usual to see anywhere.

LETTER XLIII.

Preparations for Christmas.—Splendour of the Shops.—Sugar-plums and their Inconvenience.—Christmas Trees.—Marriage of the Archduchess Theresa with the King of Naples.—Reception at the Turkish Ambassador's.—Dress of the Gentlemen.—Introduction to his Excellence.—The Esterhazy Gallery.

24th December 1836.

A MORE than usual degree of animation has pervaded the whole town for some days past, occasioned by the preparations making to celebrate Christmas. The shops are vying with each other which shall display the most tempting assortment of articles in their different lines ; and though the more extensive elbow-room of London and Paris permits of larger shops and show-rooms, they can display nothing more brilliant and more beautiful than what may be seen here.

In the important matters of shawls, blongs, velvets, silks, satins, and so forth, it is quite impossible that they should be surpassed. The silversmiths and jewellers certainly exceed in their rich exhibitions those either of France or England, with the exception, perhaps, of the interior arcana of Rundel and Bridges,

and of Hamlets. The show of ornamental glass is exquisitely and delicately beautiful, and might almost make one fancy oneself within the domain of some enchanter, so bright, so tasteful, and so fanciful, in colour and in form, are the productions of the Bohemian manufactories.

The windows of the confectioners do not indeed exhibit, as with us, plum-cakes majestic in their grandiose proportions and splendid ornaments; but, in revenge, they become magazines of bon-bons that dazzle the eyes as you enter among them, for they sparkle like grottos with a thousand crystals. The art of working in sugar was never carried, even in Paris, to greater perfection than it is here. You may find yourself eating all the fruits of the earth, whether in or out of season, while believing that you are only about to make your way through a sugar-plum. They are, beyond all contradiction, the prettiest-looking comestibles in the world : nevertheless, were I a Vienna lady, I would never permit the elegant pyramidical tray charged with them to travel round and round at my parties ; for as each one is enclosed in a little dainty dish of scalloped paper, that it may reach the mouth without soiling the gloves, the consequence is that the purity of the drawing-room carpets must inevitably suffer ; for it is not uncommon, after two or three entries of refreshments, to see the floor perfectly strewn with these sugar-plum cases.

* * * * *

But all these extra preparations for enjoyment are by no means confined to the wealthier classes. At the corner of every street we see customers of quite the lower orders bargaining for trees, adorned with knots of many-coloured paper, in order to celebrate the Christmas. These trees, which, I believe, are always spruce-firs, are provided of every variety of degree, as to size and expense, by nearly every family in Vienna where there are young people. Nor is the custom peculiar to the capital ; not a cottage in Austria, I am told, but has something of the same kind to solemnize this joyous season. The tree is called “ the tree of the little Jesus ;” and on its branches are suspended all sorts of pretty toys, bijoux, and bon-bons, to be distributed among those who are present at the fête. On the trees that are offered for sale in the streets, the place of more costly presents is supplied with an apple or a raisin, a chestnut, or a bit of gingerbread : but still they all show a gay and gala aspect to the eye, with their floating paper ribbons ; and I have watched as much happy interest in the countenance of a poor body, while balancing between boughs that waved with streamers of pink, and others where blue predominated, as the richest lady could have felt, while selecting the most elegant and costly offerings for her friends.

At some houses the tree is exhibited on Christmas-eve, which is to-night ; and in others the fête is held to-morrow. For the first we are invited by the

Princess Metternich, who means to make a set of little princes and princesses superlatively happy. From thence we go to a later party of the same kind given to children of a larger growth ; and to-morrow we are engaged for a repetition of the tree fête at the house of another kind friend.

On New Year's eve, too, a concert and supper are to welcome in the new year for us ; and on the evening of New Year's day there is to be a full-dress reception at Prince Metternich's, which is to be as splendid as diamonds and Hungarian costumes can make it.

All this, however, is but the foretaste of Vienna gaiety ; the Carnival is to follow, and, if report say true, the dissipation that it brings will continue without interval or interruption till it is over.

The court, also, seems in an attitude of greater animation than usual, which is occasioned by the approaching marriage of the Archduchess Theresa to the King of Naples. The definitive courier, fixing the day and so forth, arrived on Tuesday last, three days after which her presentation as Queen of Naples elect took place ; on Monday morning will follow the espousals, and on Monday night the concert of ceremony as *la fête du mariage*.

Last night the Turkish ambassador received company ; and for the first time, I believe, in the memory of the Christian world, the ladies of Vienna honoured him by their presence. He had given notice that as it was the "*fête of the Sultan*," he expected all

the gentlemen to appear in full court-dress. Such an intimation would in any country add greatly to the splendour of a salon, but here it is sure to produce a very brilliant effect indeed.

No party that has yet taken place has occasioned so much previous conversation as this. All the world seemed to expect that something very much out of the common way must happen in paying a visit of ceremony to a Turk, and, in truth, there was something picquant in the idea that ladies were going for the first time since the world began to enter the dwelling of a Mussulman, with free power to go out again at their pleasure.

The approach to the Ottoman dominions was gaily illuminated by coloured lamps, amidst which the words MAHMOUD SULTAN were conspicuous. The manner in which the company were ushered into the presence of the ambassador was everything that could be wished, being quite à la Stamboul. We had to traverse two rooms, both of which had a double row of Turkish attendants, who most orientally veiled their eyes with their hands as the ladies passed. Nothing could be better. But before we made our exit through the same respectful train, the effect of these veiled eyes was greatly lessened, at least for me, by my having been told by a gentleman I found there, that, on all occasions of state galas, it was the custom for the foreign legations to assist each other by the loan of attendants, and that upon the present occasion the Pope's Nuncio had

obligingly furnished a considerable number, so that the veiled eyes were not really Turkish eyes after all.

The reception-room was already quite full when we entered, and the coup-d'œil was exceedingly brilliant. It is impossible to conceive any costume more imposing, more graceful, or more calculated to show off the figure to advantage, than the full-dress of the Hungarian gentlemen; many were in military uniforms, and many more in splendid court-dresses, all sparkling with the decorations of a multitude of different orders, and forming altogether such an assembly as gave one the comfortable conviction that, notwithstanding all the labour and pains taken in many parts of the world to destroy it, the *genus gentleman* does still exist in great perfection.

Were it not for the tender affection I bear my own beautiful sex, I should wish to see such a reform among male toilets as might bring all gentlemen to something a little more like the full-dress of Austria. But the innovation would be very clearly against the interest of the ladies. At present they have not only their personal charms to render them the brightest part of every assembly, but those charms are set off by all the most becoming devices in the world; while the lords of creation, by the tyranny of fashion, are doomed to disguise whatever comeliness they have, by a style of dress at once the least becoming, and the least calculated

to mark the distinctions of society, that ever a spiteful democratic tailor invented. If this were otherwise, an assembly of fine company would altogether be a much more elegant thing; but the ladies would not be then, as now, the only splendid part of it.

Not even the rich costumes of Hungary, however, could eclipse the blaze of diamonds that sparkled on the heads, bosoms, shoulders, ceintures, and stomachers of the troop of very noble and very lovely dames who came to do homage to the fête of Mahmoud Sultan and to amuse themselves by seeing how that homage would be received by his minister and very amiable representative, Ahmed Ferik Pacha. In respect to this latter particular, they had assuredly every reason to be most fully satisfied; the courteous Musselman did all that mortal Musselman could do, to prove his sense of the honour done to him and his sublime master.

My daughter and myself had the honour of being presented to the Turk on this occasion by the Princess Metternich: his excellency made me an extremely gracious harangue through his interpreter, signifying that "Providence had accorded me great happiness in letting me see my daughter grow to such perfection."

Ices and lemonade made their way at intervals through the crowd, illuminations of coloured lamps glittered through the windows of the conservatory,

and the whole concluded by a pretty display of that soft and tranquil feu d'artifice called Bengal lights.

The spectacle would have had a much better effect had his excellency received the party in a larger room, which he might easily have done, as he occupies the noble palace of Prince Esterhazy in the Maria Hülf Faubourg: but the idea of receiving ladies at all was, it seems, rather a sudden one; and the Pacha did not feel certain that a sufficiently large party would arrive to render it either necessary or desirable to open the great apartments. The consequence of this modest doubt was, that the room prepared for the reception was most inconveniently crowded, and no opportunity given for a promenade; which was really a loss, for the company was such as, in a larger space, would have made a very brilliant spectacle.

It is in this palace that the Prince Esterhazy's fine collection of pictures is placed; and I could not find myself so near them, without feeling a strong inclination to be nearer still. This highly reputed gallery was formerly open to the public; but, since the Turkish ambassador has occupied the palace, the entrée is no longer permitted.

If I mistake not, there were some fine pictures in the rooms that were thrown open last night; and one little Rembrandt was brilliant enough to struggle successfully with all the bright objects around

it, as I found by its so constantly attracting my eyes at moments when I was certainly thinking more of originals than pictures. It is a small figure, nearly full length, bearing a standard ; I think I have seen an engraving from it.

LETTER XLIV.

General Pursuit of Amusement.—The part taken in this by the Lower Orders.—Contrast with the Temperament of Reformed England.—Visit to the Princess Metternich's Christmas Tree, and to another Christmas-eve Party. — Christmas-day. — The want of Church or Chapel for English Protestants.

26th December 1836.

IF the Carnival, when it comes, is to be more stirring and incessant in its gaiety than the last week has been, I think all orders of people will be obliged to take to their beds during Lent. I never was in any place where amusement appeared to be so essentially the chief business of life; but this dissipation has one very agreeable fact mixed up with it, namely, that there is no

“Poor o'er-laboured wight, so abject, mean and vile,”

who has not a share in it. This feature makes a wonderful difference in the effect produced on the mind by witnessing a succession of splendid fêtes. Where the higher orders, and the higher orders alone, appear to be incessantly occupied with the business of amusement, a feeling of contempt, and,

perhaps, of censure, would be apt to find place in the mind of a spectator used to a more quiet and domestic mode of existence; and frivolity, or even vice, might not improbably be looked to, as the cause of so persevering a pursuit of pleasure.

But where the whole population of a country, young and old, rich and poor, male and female, all set off spinning together, in obedience to one and the same impulse, the cause is sought and easily found in propensities with which it is much more agreeable to sympathise.

The Austrian people—it is impossible for a dweller among them to mistake the fact—are by nature light-hearted, sans-souci, and with a fondness that almost amounts to a passion for everything that takes the form of amusement. When, therefore, a season arrives in which frolic, fun, feasting, and finery are consecrated by long usage, and in some sort even by religion itself, it is quite natural for them to start off in the pursuit of them, as eagerly as greyhounds from the slip, when liberty is given, and their favourite game afoot.

In this general feeling of universal enjoyment it must be a churlish spirit that could not sympathise; and my satisfaction in the contemplation of it would be unalloyed, were it not that I often think of the long dismal faces at home, who must perforce content themselves with their hard-earned style and title of “MOST THINKING PEOPLE,” in ex-

change for the joyous temperament they have lost thereby.

It is little more than a week since I last wrote to you, and in that interval I have been initiated into many of the quaint devices by which the Austrian Christmas is solemnized. The day after the Turkish ambassador's party we were engaged to dine at Prince Metternich's, for the purpose of seeing the illumination of *the tree*, which was to take place at an early hour, expressly for the amusement of the children; but greatly to our disappointment we received notice, during the morning, that the fête could not have place in consequence of the sudden illness of Prince Metternich's sister, the Dutchess of Wurtemberg. A few hours afterwards, however, we were summoned to the illumination of the tree, as the seizure which had so alarmed the family had passed off without dangerous consequences.

One of the perfections of the Viennese parties is, that they are very punctual to the hour named for them; this is a good habit that I fear we did not bring with us, for we have very frequently found ourselves too late upon occasions when the being so has brought with it real loss. So it was on Christmas-eve. By fearing to arrive too early, we missed seeing the first happy rush of the children when the signal was given that *the tree was lighted*. We reached the scene of action, however, at the

moment when everything connected with the pretty ceremony was in full activity.

The large round dining-table was placed in the centre of the great saloon, and on it stood a fir-tree reaching almost to the lofty ceiling, on the branches of which were fastened a multitude of little waxen lights, such as the devout decorate their favourite shrines withal. Above, around, and underneath this sparkling galaxy of little stars, hung, suspended by dainty knots of various-coloured ribbons, an innumerable quantity of bon-bons and other pretty things which glittered in their rays. To disentangle these, and distribute them to the company, was to be the concluding ceremony; but, meanwhile, a beautiful circle of young faces, radiant with delight, stood round the ample table, one moment gazing at the twinkling brightness of the rich tree, and the next called upon to receive, with rapture greater still, each one a present from the abounding collection of toys that either covered the table or were ranged round it.

The moment after, the animation of the scene became greater still. Here, a huge rocking-horse was put into violent motion by its happy new possessor; there, a game of rolling balls and tumbling nine-pins was set in action. On one side, a princely little coachman, in full Jehu costume, made his whip crack over the heads of his wooden steeds; and, on the other, a lovely little girl was making acquaintance with a splendid doll. Tiny tea-things, and tiny

dinner-trays,—miniature cabinets, and miniature libraries,—and a world of things besides, more than I have wit to remember or rehearse, were speedily distributed, and appropriated among as happy a set of pretty creatures as ever bloomed and sparkled on a Christmas-eve.

Nor was the beautiful mistress of the *fête* the least charming object among them. There are some people who, when they give pleasure, seem to find themselves in the element that is native to them, and to awaken within it to a keener feeling of life and enjoyment than in any other. The Princess Metternich is one of these, and I know from excellent authority that it is not only on a *jour de fête* that she shows it.

Besides the beautiful Metternich children, there was a large family group collected. The Countess de Zichy Ferraris, mother to the princess; the Countess Seycheyni, and the Princess Odelschalki, two other daughters; and the Count and Countess Sandor, the lady being a daughter of Prince Metternich by his first marriage,—were among them.

After presents had been distributed to all the children, I perceived that the tree threw its light upon other testimonies of affection and kindness. Many very elegant gifts were presented by the princess to those around her. No one present was forgotten; and the pretty album that she gave to me was doubly welcome,—first, as being her gift, and, secondly, as giving me a fair excuse for asking auto-

graphs which would make a less elegant volume valuable.

After the table had been cleared of its many and varied treasures, the tree was, not without some difficulty, made to descend to the floor; and then, by the aid of sundry tall serving-men, the bon-bons were withdrawn from the illuminated branches, and distributed among the dancing, shouting, little host that stood ready to receive them. While I was admiring the brightness and ingenious decoration of the tree, the princess said to me, "The porter has just such another in his lodge, and depend upon it he has a circle round it just as happy as mine."

From this very animating scene we proceeded to another, not quite of the same kind, because no children were present at it; but where the same joyous occasion was made use of as an opportunity for indulging a liberal and affectionate spirit. The Baronne de P. assembles round her, upon this pretty solemnity, all her numerous family and connexions; and, I believe, we were the only persons present who were not of her regular annual party; an exception in favour of strangers which furnishes one example out of many of the manner in which kindness is extended to them in Vienna.

We arrived in time to partake the tea and coffee that preceded the apparition of the tree, which was as yet invisible; but when this was over, at a signal given, the folding-doors of another apartment were thrown open, and lo! not one tree only, but

five, shed their light, and glittered their brightly laden branches over a range of tables entirely covered with "Friendship's Offerings." I do not mean exactly that the tables bore a whole edition of the elegant little book so called; though annuals, and English ones too, made a part of the collection. No person present there but found their name inscribed on something. And now I received a very pretty toy, and a very acceptable one, being no other than a model of one of these "trees of the little Jesus," to which I shall certainly give my very best packing, in the hope of taking it home safely as a pattern. As soon as the trees themselves had been dismantled of their sugar-plums, the party returned to the other drawing-rooms, and spent the remainder of the evening in chatting and eating ices, in the manner of all other soirées.

The day after was Christmas-day, and if a word of sober sadness may break into a light account of light festivities, it shall be to express the feeling both of sorrow and surprise which is, I assure you, common to all the English here, that we have neither chapel nor clergyman to remind us that there is still such a thing as the Church of England, and that we, too, are Christians. It is not much in my principles to admire the Hume system in any thing. It seems, to my judgment, that small economies of public money are too dearly paid for by large economies in public dignity; but I will forgive all the rest, rather than the saving fit which sends an em-

bassy, stately and pre-eminent as that to the court of Vienna, without a chaplain. "It was not thus," said the venerable Princess J. to me the other day, "in former times. Lord Cowley had a chaplain,—a gentleman who, strict Catholics as we are, won the esteem and respect of us all I am sorry to see it thus I am sorry to see the English at Vienna without a chaplain."

You must be situated just as we are, amongst people proud at their hearts of the right thinking and the right doing of their rulers, before you can know how very disagreeable it is to be pitied by them for the want of both in our own.

But to come back to our Christmas-day. We did not go to church, because we had no church to go to; but we ate roast beef and plum-pudding at home, and in the evening went to a very pretty party at the house of Baron von S. where again we witnessed the liberal and affectionate ceremonies of the tree, and again found our names inscribed with a kindness that was far beyond mere courtesy on elegant little souvenirs, rendered precious by being the work of the fair giver.

The weather on this night was rough and chilling in no ordinary degree, or I should have been tempted to withdraw rather earlier than we did from the pleasant hospitality that surrounded us, for the purpose of hearing the midnight mass at St. Stephen's. But I feared the cold damp of the church at such an hour; and the more so, as I had been repeatedly

admonished that there would be no possibility of reaching the more sheltered part of the building, or of obtaining a seat at all, inasmuch as the crowd that assembled to share in this solemn and impressive service always collected some hours before it began. And so we passed our Christmas-day without entering a church at all.

LETTER XLV.

The Queen of Naples' Concert.—Illuminations by Wax Lights.—Austrian Diamonds.—Costume of the Hungarian Ladies.—Empress of Austria.—Thalberg.—Vieuxtemps.—Ministers.—Ambassadors.—Farewells of the Young Queen.—Reception at the Neapolitan Ambassador's.—Promised Festivities of the Carnival.—Departure of the Young Queen.—Prince Dietrichstein.—Duc de Reichstadt.—Last Day of the Old Year.—Grand Reception at Prince Metternich's on New Year's Day.

6th January 1837.

THE Carnival begins to-morrow ; but I defy it to keep us more incessantly engaged than we have been since my last letter. On the day I wrote it, we dined very pleasantly with an English family who are residing here ; and from thence repaired to the imperial palace, where, by the kindness of those who had the power to place us there, we were permitted to occupy seats in that gallery of the *salle de cérémonies* which, at the installation, we had seen filled by the band ; and it was from thence that we witnessed the splendid spectacle of the assembling of all the *grandees* of the empire at the concert given to the young Queen of Naples. A

silk curtain divided us from a party of the imperial children, who, like ourselves, were placed there to look down upon what is certainly one of the most brilliant coups-d'œil in the world,—namely, the court of Austria on a high gala.

The same active spirit of kindness to which I have been before so much indebted, induced the Landgrave de Furstenberg to send a servant to conduct us through what appeared almost an endless labyrinth of chambers, corridors, and staircases, but which ended at last at a door that opened upon the tribune in which we were to be stationed. It would require one of those brilliant pens that have the faculty of tracing scenes of splendour in tints that seem borrowed from the jewels that blaze among them, to do justice to the spectacle that burst upon us when that door was opened. The flood of light, in which neither gas nor oil had any share, was so intensely, though delicately bright, that the eye required a moment or two to recover itself before it could distinctly discern of what and of whom the stately pageant was composed.

To exaggerate in any way the gorgeous richness of this scene would, I do assure you, be quite impossible; but I am sorry to feel that it would be equally so to do justice to it. There is no conveying in words an idea of the delicate atmosphere of light with which many thousands of waxen tapers filled the lofty hall. What contributed greatly to the exceeding beauty of the effect, was the skilful

manner in which this soft brightness was everywhere diffused. Neither height, length, nor breadth stretched farther than the silvery flood could follow; nor was massive column or projecting frieze permitted to cast a shade over the bright assembly. A painter would have been terribly puzzled where to find the darkness that was to bring forth his light. It was evident that there are some things beside the sun that the most accomplished artists must turn from in despair.

A triple row of closely-placed wax tapers, which threaded the cornice, greatly added to this universal radiance; for, like the light of heaven, it came from above, and fell on all things. In truth, from every object in the room there seemed

“ A self-emitting light to gleam.”

The orchestra, hung with silk draperies of bridal white fringed with silver, the snow-white marble walls, the pale highly-polished scagliola pillars, the silver mountings of the countless lustres that hung from the roof, these enormous crystal lustres themselves rising tier above tier in sparkling circles, all appeared rather pregnant with light than merely reflecting it.

And what shall I tell you of the noble, royal, and imperial crowd which this blaze of more than mid-day brightness gave to view? Truly, that it was a crowd that deserved well to be so illumined. The diamonds of Vienna are renowned, and no won-

der; for in their rich abundance, their water and their setting, they are unequalled; and on this high occasion every fair head and breast blazed with their rainbow light.

The Hungarian ladies all wore their stately and picturesque full-dress, consisting of a long lace veil fastened with a knot of ribands to the top of the high head-gear, and reaching nearly to the ground behind. In front this majestic head-dress rises pyramidically, giving happy occasion for the display of jewels which shone on many a noble brow, tiara above tiara, shooting forth reduplicated rays till the aching eyes positively sank before their brightness.

The Austrian and Bohemian ladies, nowise behind their magnificent fellow-subjects of Hungary in splendour, though less imposing, from following the ordinary fashion of the day as to the form of their attire, wore their gems in every variety of arrangement that taste and fancy could invent; and a more brilliant throng of graceful and noble women never assembled to do honour to the bridal of a princess, than that which now sparkled in the great Rittersaal of Vienna.

First, of course, as well in splendour as in place, was the gracious Empress. There is a character of tranquil innate dignity in the countenance and manner of this imperial lady, calculated to give an admirable finish to such a pageant as I am now attempting to describe; and I am inclined to believe that, had all her glittering gems been left upon

her toilet, she would still have been the most dignified figure in the presence.

The young queen is exceedingly pretty, but very small, especially when seen, as on the present occasion, between the Empress and the majestic Archduchess Sophia. Her head-dress was magnificent, and arranged with so much tasteful lightness, that it looked, notwithstanding the weighty world of wealth of which it was composed, both youthful and becoming.

I hope you are not weary yet of hearing of splendid apparel, for though, according to custom, I have put the ladies first, I am by no means sure whether I do not think that the gentlemen made the finer part of the spectacle; not, however, that the jewels in which their multitudinous decorations were set could vie with the diamonds of the ladies, but because the Hungarian dresses, the military uniforms, and the full court costumes of the chancellors and chamberlains are so beyond, both in richness and elegance, the male attire that I have been accustomed to see, that they produce as much effect upon us from their novelty as from their splendour.

The concert itself was as good as any concert can be where the vocal performers are not of first-rate excellence. Thalberg played one of his miraculous capriccios on the piano, and Vieuxtemps performed a concerto on the violin with his usual exquisite taste. Between the acts the whole of the imperial family rose, and, while ices and other refreshments were

handed round, walked about the richly-carpeted space left between the chairs they occupied and the orchestra. At one extremity of this space sat Prince Metternich, Count Kolowrath, and one or two other nobles, probably holding some office about the court. Opposite to these, at the other end, were the most distinguished members of the corps diplomatique. The Nuncio, England, France, the Sublime Porte, and Naples, occupied the first rank. The Emperor and Empress addressed all the ambassadors in succession, and then conversed with such of the company as were within reach of them. I observed the young new-made queen addressing many, both ladies and gentlemen, with an air of great kindness and condescension. She was, probably, uttering her last adieux to them.

Altogether this court concert was an interesting and beautiful spectacle, but I doubt if it may not have the bad effect of preventing us from ever thinking anything very splendid again.

The following evening we went to a very elegant soirée at the mansion of the Neapolitan minister, given on occasion of the king's marriage, when we had again the satisfaction of seeing all "*LA CRÊME*," as it is emphatically called, of the noblesse. All the foreign ministers were there, I think, except our own; at least, he was the only one I did not chance to see. There I had the honour of being presented to his royal highness the Prince of Salerno, who returns to Naples with the young queen, and who

kindly told me that he should hope to meet me again there.

The Turk was there, surrounded with three or four of his attachés, all looking about them, I thought, very much as if they fancied that they were already arrived in Paradise. *On dit* that this amiable Pacha is going, during the carnival, to return the compliment which the ladies paid on the jour de fête of the Sultan, by giving them a splendid ball. If he does this, he will certainly be the most popular Turk that ever visited Vienna; and it is much to be hoped that all ambassadors sent by the Sublime Porte will follow his excellent example in all parts of the Christian world. This hoped-for fête is already the one which seems to be looked forward to with the greatest interest, though there are a multitude of others that all seem to promise well. If all we hear talked of come to pass, the short carnival of this year will not suffice to give a night to each. For some reason or other, which it is difficult to understand, considering the avowed passion of all Austrians for the exercise, it is during the carnival only that the *beau monde par excellence* permit themselves to dance at Vienna; and then they do it every day in the week except Friday, the archbishop putting his veto upon all fiddling for that evening. I shall expect to see many a fair cheek grow pale by this incessant dissipation, which would be delightful if spread out over the whole winter, but which must surely become very hard work when thus contracted into four weeks.

For some time to come my letters are likely to be a sort of Morning Post for Vienna, containing a full, true, and particular account of all sorts of fêtes and festivals. So if it should happen that diamonds and pearls, beautiful ladies and magnificent gentlemen, come and go in my letters with something like puppet-show rapidity, you must not wonder at it.

On the 28th, the Queen of Naples set off for her new kingdom. Pretty young creature! May her future lot be as brilliant, as happy, and as innocent as that through which she has already passed! She will find certainly a steadier sunshine, and the airs of heaven will blow less capriciously on her at Naples than at Vienna; but she leaves so much *steady brilliance* of another kind behind her, that she runs less risk than most other new-made queens of having her head turned by the crown that is to be put upon it.

One day last week we were at a very pleasant dinner-party at General W.'s, where we had the pleasure of meeting the Prince Dietrichstein, one of the most highly-talented noblemen in Austria. It was not upon this occasion, however, that I saw him for the first time, though la Baronne W. was the person who first introduced him to me. She had taken me to see the beautiful palace which he has recently completed in one of the Faubourgs, and he made me a long and very agreeable morning visit in return.

He is the elder brother of the Count Maurice,

who was governor to the Duc de Reichstadt; and the day he called on me he related many anecdotes respecting the distinguished élève of his brother, which were of the highest order of interest. Though for some reason or other he had not been previously in habits of intimacy, or of frequent intercourse, with the son of Napoleon, the young man made it his especial request to be permitted to pay him a visit after the revolution of 1830, apparently with a view of hearing his opinion (which, notwithstanding his living entirely apart from all affairs of state, is one that every man in the empire would listen to with attention,) on the subject of that revolution, and still more, perhaps, on the propositions that had been made to himself in consequence of it.

It was probably the high admiration which Prince Dietrichstein was known to have expressed for the great talents of the Emperor Napoleon, which induced this wish, on the part of his son, to converse with him at a moment when it is impossible not to suspect that, notwithstanding his uncompromising obedience to the judgment which had refused to listen to the overtures of the Napoleon party in France, the young man felt, or fancied, that—

His fate cried out,
And made each petty artery in his body
As hardy as the Nemean lion's nerve.

But with a spirit that would certainly not have

shrunk from stating his opinions freely, however much they might have differed from those of others, Prince Dietrichstein's judgment was of too clear and too profound an order to permit him, for a moment, to believe that any attempt to put a second Napoleon on the throne could be either desirable or successful. He appears to have answered the duke's questions with consummate wisdom, and in that tone of independent and uncompromising truth which brings conviction even with disappointment. The young man listened to his decision as only truth, so spoken, can be listened to, and tranquil and contented conviction seems to have been the result.

Conscious that this conversation was of no ordinary importance, Prince Dietrichstein made a *résumé* of it a few days afterwards, and sent it to the young duke; and it was referred to by him, says his historian, very frequently afterwards.

I have seldom listened with greater interest to the conversation of any one, than to that of Prince Dietrichstein,—not only on the subject of the Duc de Reichstadt, but on every other that he touched; his eloquence has all the brilliant vivacity of a young man, and the profound thinking of an old one. His learning and great acquirements have procured him a species of celebrity that I do not remember to have seen accorded to any one, in any country. Many appear to differ in opinion from him, but none differ in that formed of him; he stands acknowledged as

the man most highly gifted with intelligence, and the most remarkable in erudition of the age and yet he lives almost in seclusion ; few, very few, are admitted to the high enjoyment of conversing with him ; and though it is said that he might have commanded almost any place or appointment he chose to have, he will accept of none. His library seems to be the only station where his spirit feels perfectly at home. Many, however, express a hope that he does not hide himself within it only to read, but that some day or other he will let the world share in the speculations, both lofty and profound, in which he is supposed to be occupied. Some years ago he passed a good deal of time in England, with whose literature and language he appears as familiar as with his own. He speaks of the country as a man of liberal views and high intelligence would have been likely to do a dozen years ago. I should like to anticipate his paying it another visit, when once again it might be in a condition to merit the admiration and affection he expresses for it.

* * * * *

On the last night of the old year we went to a concert and supper that kept us till we gaily welcomed in the new one ; and on the evening of new year's day we paid our compliments to the Princess Metternich, who, according to annual custom, receives all the ambassadors and their ladies at dinner, and afterwards the whole of the society admitted to her circle,—gentlemen as well as ladies

being in full-dress; so here again I was blessed by a sight of my much-admired Hungarian costumes, and all the sparkling paraphernalia of Austria. I am terribly afraid that, henceforth, a London party will strike me as looking very like a set of shepherds and shepherdesses from the extreme simplicity of their apparel!

LETTER XLVI.

English Ignorance of Austria.—Indifference of the Austrians on the subject. — Their superior Information respecting England. — Anecdote of the Edinburgh Review.—Anecdote of the Quarterly. —False Reasonings.—Effect of the Austrian System on the Lower Classes of the People.—Madame de Staël.—M. de Lamennais and George Sand.—Greatest-happiness Principle.

9th January 1837.

“IL n’y a pas de pays qui soit jugé avec plus de défaveur que l’Autriche,” says M. Girardin ; and then with perfect truth he adds, “et il n’y en a pas non plus qui s’en inquiète si peu.”

No one at all acquainted with Austria can fail to acknowledge the justice of both these observations; but in addition to the first I should say, that there was no country in Europe so little known, and so little understood.

The people of England, for instance, taken en masse, know no more of the internal policy of Austria, and its results upon the happiness of the people, than they do of the system of police at Pekin. To show that a few among them may be better in-

formed, will by no means suffice to contradict this statement; and it is indeed to such, and to such only, that I would appeal to pass judgment upon the truth of it.

This ignorance begins at the very highest point, and descends with unbroken and steady darkness to the very lowest. It embraces every circumstance connected with the formation and administration of the laws of the land—everything relative to its vast internal resources—all that belongs to the quiet history of its ever-progressing improvements—to the universal diffusion of knowledge—to the facility, equal to all, of obtaining redress from administrative justice—to the wealth of its citizens—the prosperity of its manufacturers,—and, more important than all, the blessed security with which all orders, from the highest to the lowest, look round on their altars and their homes, and triumph in the hope that so they shall leave them to their children: all this is equally unknown, unthought of, and unsung. Nay, even that universal spirit of enjoyment, born, I believe, of music and clear air, which spreads itself into every street and alley of their cities, dances through their villages, and carols from their mountain tops,—even this, brightly visible as it is and must be to the least observant traveller,—even this has never found a chronicler to establish the simple fact, that so it is.

But, strange to say, instead of these easily ascertained truths being universally known and acknowledged, the generally received idea of Austria is, that

its government is a hard dry despotism, unmindful of the comforts of those whose lot it is to labour, and bestowing its proud smile on such alone as have hereditary place and power within the realm, adding strength to their strength, and power to their power, while

“ The hungry rout look up, and are not fed.”

Were a newly-arrived European traveller from the United States to declare that he had found the government of that country to consist of a well-organized monarchy with mild laws peacefully obeyed, the statement would be quite as near the truth as that which, in a sort of guess-work style, is every day given of Austria. Such representations are often made even by those who have no wish or purpose to deceive, but who are in fact under a delusion as strong, and an ignorance as dark, as the savages of the Pacific when they took a ship for a god, and the report of a gun for the thunder of the Almighty.

The Austrians themselves quietly, very quietly, enjoy the jest, and in truth appear to place wonderfully little value upon the judgment of foreigners in general, respecting them. Several with whom we have fallen into considerable intimacy have amused us by pointing out with perfect good-humour different published statements concerning them and their country, which demonstrate an almost incredible degree of ignorance. All this is met on their parts with very cordial laughter ; but never, in any

single instance that I have witnessed, with the slightest mixture of pique or resentment.

One gentleman, and a very eminent one too, when conversing on this subject, said, "And, after all, what does it signify? Perhaps, the fault is our own. We seek not to give publicity to our institutions, because by doing so we should in no degree increase their usefulness at home; and it is to this that all our attention is turned."

"But might not the utility of such institutions be more widely spread," said I, "if they were more generally known?"

"Not in Austria," he replied. "Every Austrian knows what our institutions are, and that is all the publicity necessary to them. It is not the custom here, as it is with you, to publish statements respecting our universities and academies, our hospitals and almshouses, our lycées, gymnases, infant-schools, and the like, any more than it is to publish that our railroads pay twenty per cent., while it is possible that those of more communicative lands pay nothing. But everybody whom it concerns knows all about it; and why should we take any trouble, or make any exertions, to spread the knowledge farther?"

There was much of that abundant commodity, *Austrian good sense*, in this, but it had nothing very flattering to our English vanity; and it cannot be denied that our Yankee friends pay us a greater compliment, both when they fall into ecstasies of anger at our expressing disapprobation of anything

belonging to them, and when with all the zeal of apostles, and of martyrs too, they dilate upon their own experiments in the science of government for our especial instruction and improvement.

This indifference on the part of my Austrian friends as to whether we knew anything about them or not, would have been much less provoking, had I not perceived that while they made no objection at all to our blundering on in very visible darkness about them, they took care to be most exceedingly well informed respecting us. I have heard England descanted upon, with all the variations from its past strength to its present sickness,—arising, as one among them said, from a fit of madness in one half of the population, and of somnolency in the other,—with a knowledge as familiar as profound.

And not only is the political condition of the country thoroughly known and understood, but its literature from the highest, to very nearly the lowest productions, is almost as much the subject of familiar discourse among reading people here, as in London. The prohibition of works which might do mischief, seems only to extend to the publication of them here (the only mode probably by which they could get into such general circulation as to be dangerous); but certain it is that many volumes freely pass the frontier, which I am persuaded the writers believe to be as strictly prohibited in Vienna, as wine in the dwelling of a Mussulman, or pork in that of a Jew.

When speaking of our apparent geographical acquaintance with their country, one gentleman showed us a number of the *Edinburgh Review*,—I forget the precise date, but it was I think about five years ago,—in which Prague was spoken of as the capital of Hungary. The *bévue* had caused considerable amusement at the time, which was not lessened, as he told us, by the sequel. An Austrian (well known by the way in England) wrote to the editor of the *Review* as soon as this remarkable statement met his eye, requesting him very civilly to restore to Bohemia her much-loved capital; the editor politely answered the letter, acknowledging, as my informant said, that, after due inquiry made, it had been satisfactorily ascertained that Prague was in truth the capital of Bohemia, and not of Hungary but that it was their principle never to contradict themselves, and therefore that they must beg to decline doing so on the present occasion. This letter is said to be very carefully preserved as a literary curiosity.

The manner in which the English language is read and spoken here, is a source both of pleasure and surprise to us. That they should acquire the idiom better than most other countries, may well enough be accounted for by the fact, that many of our words, and even phrases, have a common origin, and this is of course applicable to every part of Germany; but the study of English appears to be very nearly as general in Austria, as that of French with us. On this point too I must give you

an anecdote, and it will be a proof of impartiality, for this time it is à propos of the Quarterly. In the review given in that journal of Captain Basil Hall's universally read work, "Schloss Hainfeld," a passage was pointed out to me containing, as nearly as I can recollect, the following phrase :—

"Should this work ever reach Styria in an intelligible language" "The writer of this article is not, as it should seem, aware how greatly the language and literature of England is studied and admired among us," was the courteous remark of the person who showed me the article.

It would be easy enough to multiply proofs that Austria is a terra incognita to England; and were this all, it might be sufficient to remark upon the fact, that it is to be regretted a country containing so many objects of interest, and so great material for reflection, should be less visited by us than other lands, which, if they have equal claims to attention, have not equally the recommendation of being little known.

But this is *not* all. If it were, the thousand miles, or near it, which divide our two capitals, would be quite apology enough, were any wanted, for a million of English visiting Paris, for one who visits Vienna. The loss is wholly ours; and if all who never passed the frontier of Austria would only reason with the same simplicity of truth as La Fontaine's pigeon,—

"Quiconque ne voit guère
N'a guère à dire aussi,"—

no reasonable complaint could possibly lie against us for knowing little or nothing of what is going on here. But, unhappily, we do not so reason; and not only the internal policy of Austria, but her progress in arts, science, and industry is presumptuously canvassed by persons very little better qualified to discourse of such matters, than to lay down an accurate map of the moon.

Worst of all, however, is that bold assumption of results from premises unknown, which stigmatises a government as harsh, because it is not representative, and a population as slavish and wretched, because there are no symptoms of riot and revolution among them. Nevertheless, you must not believe that I have learnt to think a despotism, even just and beneficent as that of Austria, a better thing than the genuine unmangled constitution of England. Far from it.

Were I a peasant, indeed, or a working mechanic, I CERTAINLY SHOULD DO SO; but I have not reached that height of disinterested benevolence which can make me practically prefer a system of government decidedly favourable to the classes with which I have the least relation, to the injury of those with which I have the most.

If my patriotism were quite pure, I suppose it would be otherwise, for the peasants and mechanics are the most numerous; but there are a multitude of vanities and sympathies which interfere with this, and it would be a hard task to overcome them. If

I were sovereign, however, and did it actually depend upon my single will whether the greater or the lesser number of my subjects should be the most favoured by a system about to be established, I am willing to flatter myself that I should give the preference to the former; and, submitting to be an absolute monarch for their sakes, resign the more tempting glory of framing a constitution that should make me the king of many illustrious men, instead of the father of many more obscure ones.

But happily no such responsibility rests upon my conscience, and therefore, notwithstanding my persuasion that the government of Austria is more favourable to the labouring classes than any other, I may declare without any feeling of self-reproach, that, deeply as I reverence its paternal gentleness, I would rather live under the constitution of my own country, provided it be not permitted to melt and dissolve away into chaos.

Yet, were I obliged to give fully and explicitly my reasons for this preference, it is probable that a good deal of national, and perhaps some portion of individual ambition and vanity would be found to mix with it, greatly at variance, doubtless, with that enlarged philanthropy which declares that the largest general amount of happiness ought to be the object of all legislation.

To controvert such a doctrine does, in truth, seem an unchristian and unholy task, and I will not attempt it. But in confirmation of my opinion that

the despotism of the Austrian government is more calculated to promote the happiness, than to gratify the ambition of its subjects, and that it is therefore so far in conformity with the OSTENSIBLE views of all the radical reformers throughout Europe, I will quote a few words from Madame de Staël, to whom no one can attribute any undue partiality to Austria. When speaking of its government, she says :

“L’administration est conduite avec beaucoup de sagesse et de justice : les affaires se traitent d’après un certain ordre que rien au monde ne dérangerait ; des règles invariables en décident ; et tout se passe dans un profond silence. Ce silence n’est pas l’effet de la terreur, car que peut-on craindre dans un pays où les vertus du monarque et les principes de l’équité dirigent tout ?”

This expresses with sufficient clearness her opinion of the manner in which the government works ; and to prove what she thinks of its effects, she exclaims, with something very like contempt at the peaceful contentment she witnesses around her,

“Ce peuple où il n’y a que du bonheur !”

Might it not be desirable, before M. de Lamennais and George Sand go farther in their partnership pursuit of what is called, I believe, “the greatest-happiness principle,” that they should put a stop for a few weeks to the publication of their “Monde,” and come to study a little “ce peuple où il n’y a que du bonheur” ? It is possible, perhaps, that the *bonheur* would not prove exactly of the quality

they seem to have it in contemplation to advance; but nevertheless, as the fact of the existing happiness rests upon such unquestionable authority, it might be as well that they should compare it, such as it still shows itself after the trial of some few hundred years, with the probable result of their "*fraternizing system*."

I am not, indeed, quite sure that the Austrian government will second my invitation to these illustrious individuals; but I am decidedly of opinion, that if it be the real object of "*Le Monde*" to point out the manner in which the labouring classes can live with the greatest degree of comfort and contentment, (*coute qui coute* in the way of revolution, which may possibly be a part of their doctrine,) they could do nothing so likely to clear their intellects on the subject as to come and see how these matters are managed here.

LETTER XLVII.

Scientific Soirée at Baron Jaquin's.—Contrast between that and all other Vienna Soirées.—Soirée at Baron Hammer's.—His Asiatic Library.—Arabian Bon-mots.—Comte de Montbel.—His observations on the effects of Revolution.—Divorce between Landlord and Tenant.—Return of Soldiers of Fortune.—Anecdotes.

Vienna, Jan. 10th, 1837.

As I do not pretend to keep a journal either for your sake or my own, but content myself with making notes from time to time of what I wish to remember, with no great regularity as to dates, I have by no means given you a full account of all our doings and seeings, for this would lead to tedious length, notwithstanding the agreeable nature of our occupations. Few days, indeed, for the last six weeks have passed without engagements; but, pleasant as they have been, it would be quite impossible to recount them all. I must not, however, fail to mention two visits, which on looking back I find I have omitted, because they were not only interesting in themselves, but deserve notice as having introduced us into a set perfectly distinct from all others,

and too little diffused in general society to make it likely that we should meet many of the persons who composed it elsewhere.

The first of these parties was at the house of M. le Baron de Jaquin, a distinguished botanist, son to the well-known scientific traveller of that name, and director of the botanic garden attached to the university, who, as I understand, assembles round him one evening in the week all the science and learning of Vienna. The circle on the evening we were there was rather a large one, but the proportion of ladies very small.

It is always rather a formidable thing to enter a society of savans par excellence; and the perceiving as we entered how very few of our own sex were admitted to the honours of this soirée did not lessen the feeling either in my daughter or myself. However, we had the good fortune to meet a very charming country-woman among them, whose acquaintance has ever since been a great pleasure to us; and having overcome the first awful impression produced by a room-full of gentlemen, who, like Moliere's great Grecian, were all "*vétus en noir*," we soon found ourselves very tolerably at our ease.

The receiver-general of all the savans of Vienna is a venerable and intelligent-looking old gentleman with a small black cap on his head, which converted him into a very perfect Rembrandt. He did the honours to us as strangers with a great deal of bonhomie and kindness; gave us to taste of some genuine manna

of the desert, lately presented to him in the state in which it had exuded from its parent tree; showed us some well-preserved morsels of the tree itself; and moreover introduced to us many very intelligent and conversable gentleman.

With all this it was impossible that a couple of hours should not pass pleasantly, and I rejoiced at finding myself there; certainly not the less from being conscious that, if I had suddenly migrated from the sun to the moon, I should hardly have made a change more remarkable, than from the fashionable salons of Vienna into this scientific assembly.

All nations and all people have most assuredly a right to manage their own affairs in their own way; but, notwithstanding this indisputable truth, where is the traveller to be found who does not take the liberty of passing judgment upon all he sees? Under cover, therefore, of this universally assumed privilege, I venture to give it as my opinion that both sets might be improved, were the division a little less perceptible.

The second visit to which I have alluded was an evening passed at the house of Baron Hammer. This is a name of oriental celebrity, and one too well known to require my telling you anything more about him than that he is *the Asiatic Hammer*. His party was a very pleasant one, — not made up so exclusively of sages as that of the evening before, but more fairly coming under the description of a *conversazione* than most meetings intended to be

such. His magnificent collection of eastern MSS. were displayed to us under every advantage: few men have such rare volumes to show, and fewer still have the power of discoursing concerning them with equal learning or with equal vivacity.

Two or three Arabian conceits that Baron Hammer repeated to us, have rested upon my memory. Whatever they say, seems to be said poetically, whether it concern great things or small. "At the end of the world," says one of their authors, "when all things save Paradise shall be destroyed, God will look upon hell, and at that instant its flames will be extinguished for ever."

"A lady complained to her lover," says another, "that he had sent no carrier pigeon to her with a letter 'I dared not do it,' replied the lover, . . . 'the fire of my love would have burst forth from the letter, and the poor bird would have fallen to the earth, a roasted pigeon!'"

"God was playing at chess with himself," says another, "when he found out how to make the world."

Among many other curious things in this probably unique library, (which is arranged, by the way, with very great elegance,) Baron Hammer showed us several Arabian-bound volumes, of which the covers, richly inlaid or painted, were of some wood that effectually guarded them against all attacks from worms. The books so bound were peculiarly elegant in appearance.

In the course of this evening I had the great pleasure of making the acquaintance of le Comte de Montbel, the talented high-minded minister and friend of Charles-dix, and on the following morning he called on me.

I have seldom received more pleasure from a visit ; his conversational powers, or more properly his eloquence, is very great. He spoke much of the present state of France ; but dwelt less on the effects produced by the last revolution, than on those left by the total bouleversement of society which took place at a much earlier period ; and the consequences of which he had himself watched, not in the great bustling arena of Paris, which we are all too much accustomed to consider exclusively as France, but in the provinces, where thousands and thousands of individuals, who have never mixed themselves up with the busy intrigues of the capital, have nevertheless had the peaceable tenour of their existence destroyed by a succession of political changes in which they never bore a part.

His picture of the various sources of unhappiness to which these changes had given rise, was very striking. The first great shock given to the provincial manner of living appears to have been produced by the abolition of the majorat, and the consequent division of land. The evils attendant upon this, tremendous in extent, though making little figure among the reasonings of Europe on the effect of revolutions, were felt on the lands themselves, and

not in the all-absorbing scenes of the capital. The peasants, it is true, continued to cultivate the soil, and continued to receive their daily bread for doing so; but every village had no longer a seigneur, to whose protection and kindness its inhabitants had hereditary right, and whose interests were constantly interwoven with their own. Instead of this, strangers in many instances began to possess the land, indifference or dislike took the place of fealty and affection, and the strongest tie that bound together the different classes of the rural population was broken for ever.

The next evil that affected equally every part of the widely-spreading territory of France, was usually felt by those of a somewhat higher rank in society, and made its insidious approaches under the mask of good fortune. During the period of the empire, there was not a little town, scarcely, perhaps, a hamlet within its whole extent, in which some soldier of fortune had not been raised from the obscurity of an humble origin to the rank and station of a distinguished officer. While Napoleon remained amongst them, and war unceasing kept them far from their relatives and natural homes, no evil appeared to arise from this; but, on the contrary, the dangers and difficulties of their roving profession found a very suitable consolation in the honours and consideration that they won.

But when at last the piping days of peace returned, and every province received its wandering

sons back into its own bosom, the consequences of the system which had uprooted them from the position in which they had been placed by Providence, and given them another holding no sympathy with it, became rapidly visible.

M. de Montbel related several anecdotes that went strongly to prove how painful was the influence of this parvenu rank on those who held it, and many of these anecdotes arose from circumstances which had passed under his own eye.

To a small town, near his father's country residence, one of Napoleon's rapidly promoted colonels returned, to enjoy among his relatives and earliest friends the rank and the glory he had acquired during the war. Notwithstanding the true and well-known loyalty of the Montbel race, they were by no means insensible to the martial honour which their country had acquired under the Emperor; and, as a proof of esteem for the valour and good conduct of this officer, the old count sent him an invitation to dinner. Instead of writing an answer, the young colonel came to the chateau himself, and begged to see its owner. The count received him with the most flattering kindness, and personally repeated his invitation.

"Excuse me, monseigneur!" said the brave soldier, strongly agitated, "and think not that I am insensible to your kindness but could I feel myself at ease while seated at a table at which I well remember that my father has waited?"

It was in vain that the kind inviter sought to convince the gallant soldier that he had himself carved out his own station in society, and that he could never be misplaced while holding it.—“I might think so elsewhere,” he replied, “and fancy, perhaps, that others thought so too; but though you, mon-seigneur, may have greatness of mind enough to forget my origin, there are many nearer and dearer to me who cannot. I cannot raise them to my own rank, but I can descend again to theirs; and this will cost me less than witnessing the feelings caused among them by any appearance on my part of wishing to withdraw from the circle in which they move.”

The sentiments thus expressed were too genuine to be combated; but it may be doubtful whether the yielding to them, or opposing them, was calculated to give the most pain.

Another instance of the same kind, and differing from the former only in showing from experience that the “foregone conclusion” was correct, occurred in the same neighbourhood. An officer who had obtained a distinguished rank in the army of Napoleon, retired after the restoration to reside in his native province. He was noticed in the most cordial and flattering manner by a nobleman of exalted station in the neighbourhood, dined repeatedly at his table, and for a time appeared extremely well-pleased in cultivating a friendship that did him so much honour. But a few months after this inter-

course began, the nobleman received a visit from his military neighbour, and greeted him with his usual cordial cheerfulness ; but, instead of replying in the same strain, the officer told him with much emotion that he was come to take leave of him.

“ Take leave ! . . . and where are you going, mon cher ? ” — “ I am not going . . . I will not go,” replied the other, — “ I love my father as entirely as I could have done had he been field-marshal ; and while he lives, nothing . . . no feeling will, I hope, be strong enough to make me forsake him ; . . . but you know not what I have endured, monseigneur, at your table. The very seeing that your guests were keeping watch over their lips, lest by inadvertence they should allude to some person or some place that might painfully recall to me other days . . . the watching this has been torture ! I will expose myself to it no more ; . . . but, should we meet again far from my native fields and natural friends, your kindness would be most valuable to me ! ”

There is something sufficiently painful in thus seeing very estimable human beings placed in situations which render their best affections a source of suffering ; but still worse is it to listen to the records of those who have turned with unnatural policy from all whom the lucky chances of a predatory warfare have left below them. The conquering an enemy in the field has, in many instances, only been a prelude to conquering the strongest feelings of the heart at home ; and if the obvious logic of common

sense is not sufficient to show how greatly the evils attendant upon the overthrow of established order exceed any possible good that may result from it, I only wish that all who require a more powerful demonstration of the truth before they yield their assent to it, could hear the result of long and patient observation on the subject, given in the forcible language of M. de Montbel.

LETTER XLVIII.

Princess Metternich's Ball.—French Ambassador.—Prussian Minister.—Ball Dresses.—Falsehoods respecting Austria.—Romeo and Juliet.

15th Jan. 1837.

YESTERDAY, at the mansion of Prince Metternich, we were at the first grand carnival ball of the season, and a very splendid entertainment it was. The suite of rooms is a fine one; and the *salle de bal*, which, like many other fine receiving-rooms in Vienna, has walls wearing the appearance of white marble, was rendered radiant by some hundreds of wax lights, and by the presence of a very splendid assemblage of company.

Though no country can excel the taste and finish of a Parisian toilet, the palm of splendour must unquestionably be accorded to that of Vienna. This surpassing costliness of attire does not arise solely from the general use among all the married women of the very finest diamonds in the world, though undoubtedly this contributes much to it; but, in truth, every article of dress worn by people of fashion

at a Vienna ball is as perfect in costly elegance as the most lavish expenditure can make it. I will not attempt to indite a *magazin de modes* for your instruction, or venture to enter much into particulars upon this recondite subject ; only one trifling article will I mention as a sample of the minor finishing required by these *élégantes*. The dainty little transparencies that are seen depending from between the finger and the thumb of every fair waltzer by way of a pocket handkerchief cost at least five hundred francs.

I know that a young lady's ball dress is considered in all lands as something sacred to the Graces, and that the whole fabric should consist of materials lighter and brighter than any clothing that ordinary mortals can presume to wear ; but the ball dresses of Vienna not only fulfil, they surpass this high-wrought expectation. I will not positively assert that I saw last night any of those "*draperies of woven air*" which Lady Morgan describes in one of her youthful novels as the favourite garb of her heroine ; but, short of this atmospheric texture, every species of delicate web that the ingenuity of man has invented, might have been found there in the greatest perfection.

We had dined at the British ambassador's with a large party, and the elegant dresses worn there led me to imagine that the fair wearers intended to spare themselves the trouble of a second toilet ; but they had no such idleness in their thoughts, and appeared a few hours afterwards in new decorations,

as far surpassing their former ones as the vesture of the butterfly does that of the chenille.

Two days after Princess Metternich's ball followed the first of the four announced by the French ambassador ; and, on the Saturday following, another at the house of the Prussian minister. Both these entertainments were extremely elegant ; that at the Countess de St. Aulaire's peculiarly so. The hotel inhabited by the French ambassador is, indeed, one of the finest in Vienna, and particularly well fitted by the arrangement of the rooms for a fête at which a large company are to be accommodated. Several of the archdukes were present there ; as were, also, the Duke of Nassau and his son. There was not a sit-down supper, as at Prince Metternich's ; but the sumptuous buffet left nothing to be desired on that score.

The mansion of the Prussian minister does not approach that of the French in size or splendour ; but, *en revanche*, it has the finest staircase in Vienna.

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In the advantageous Asmodeus-like position in which we find ourselves, and of which I have already boasted to you, we are not only within reach of balls, concerts, and dinners, both above and below ; but also enjoy the advantage of becoming better acquainted with the politics of the *tiers état*, than many of those who live and die in the same city with them. You may imagine, perhaps, that among the higher class we hear nothing but praise of the

system that guards their greatness, and nothing but grumbling from those below them against any power that prevents their being first themselves. But it is not so. I have heard from those outside the pale with which the noblesse surround their high-born privileges, as much fervent thanksgiving for the tranquil blessings of their steady government, as I have ever listened to within it; and, on the other hand, I could easily quote, if I thought it well to do so, some pretty strong chirpings from among the *haute volée*, because their erratic soarings were in a degree checked by the paternal caution which renders some things difficult in Austria that are all too easy elsewhere.

If among the salons of the *boursier* aristocracy we have occasionally found a nearer approach to the wearisome pettifogging tone of would-be philosophers than was to be met elsewhere, it was, I conceive, chiefly owing to the freer and more promiscuous reception granted there to those foreign wanderers whose system it is to *promener* their idle tediousness and regenerating rhapsodies from capital to capital, eating as many good dinners as they can get, and leaving, in return for them, speculations as empty as their champagne glasses.

Among such foreigners as these, I have occasionally listened to a good deal of trumpery treason against the cause of good order, and have certainly thought that the seldomer the good citizens of Vienna entertained such unprofitable guests, the

better and the happier they were likely to remain.

Some of these wandering lights have already given the fruit of their travelled wisdom to the world; and I have read both French and English lucubrations, to prove that young gentlemen enjoying a six-weeks' holiday may know a great deal better how to govern the lands they visit, than any king or kaiser who may chance to be native there. The gentle public read and believe it all; and some of those marked by their vocation as the most intellectual portion of the reading world, weave most conclusive arguments from the puerile fables thus brought home, and not unfrequently prove to demonstration that the things of which they are the most profoundly ignorant, are precisely those upon which it is their especial duty to instruct the world.

I heard a man say the other day, whose avowed object was to enlighten me respecting the condition of Austria, (but he was not an Austrian, observe,) that the late Emperor was so jealous of all the members of his own family, that when the Archduke Charles *resided at Prague, and held a court there, the report of his popularity put his brother in a fever, and that he thereupon recalled the archduke from his government.**

To this I could only reply "Indeed!"....but I took the trouble of inquiring respecting the fact

* Exactly the same story has since been published in an English Review.

from those well capable of giving me correct information upon the history of the country, and was assured most positively that the Archduke Charles never in his life resided in Prague, or any other part of Bohemia; and at the same time I received the following sketch of the illustrious soldier's connexion with that province. It was on the frontier of Bohemia that the Archduke Charles made so skilful a stand against the forces of Napoleon, that, though again and again obliged to retreat before him, he still kept the horrors of war from the hearths of the people. The gratitude felt for the bravery, watchfulness, and unremitting care shown by this great general for their welfare, not only won for him the hearts of the Bohemians, but brought him nearer still to that of his generous and grateful brother. The poverty of the Austrian exchequer at that period is well known; but, when the desperate struggle was at length over, the imperial soldier's retirement was solaced by a pension attached to the merely titular office of viceroy of Bohemia. Some years after this, the Archduke Charles became wealthy by inheriting the princely fortune of his uncle by marriage, the Duke Albert of Saxe-Teschen. He immediately resigned the pension no longer necessary for his comfort, and with it the title of viceroy. SUCH was the jealous, ignominious recal of the Archduke Charles by his brother Francis. This is, I assure you, but one specimen among many, of the gross falsehoods with which a certain set of

politicians endeavour to mystify Europe upon the internal condition of Austria.

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I told you some time ago of the great pleasure I had received from the performance of Madame Rettich in *Desdemona*; and having learnt that *Romeo and Juliet* was also on the scene here, I ventured to express to the Landgrave de Fürstenburg, who has the entire control in such matters, that I should greatly like to see this enchanting actress in the part of Juliet. This wish has been most kindly complied with; and in addition to all I have said of her before, I can now add my testimony to her power of depicting, with perfect grace and truth, that fervour of Italian girlish love which has so often been made the *pierre de touche* of a *débütante* with us.

Yet Madame Rettich has some drawbacks to overcome in acting this part. She is a wife and a mother; and though the symmetry of her fine form is as perfect as ever, she has no longer that almost childish air which the character seems to demand. But she contrives most ably to overcome this difficulty, as well as every other that lies in her way; for she throws so much sweet youthful music into the tones of her charming voice, that the imagination immediately receives the impression that exactly, “come Lammas-eve at night, she ’ll be fourteen.”

The pretty playful scene between Juliet and her nurse is, for what reason I guess not, altogether

omitted ; which is a loss to Madame Rettich, for she would have played it delightfully. Another disadvantage was the portly person of her Romeo, who, though an excellent actor, would find less difficulty, I should think, in dressing for Falstaff than for the *svelt* and graceful Romeo. In spite of all this, however, the heroine of the night fully sustained her high reputation, and left us still more convinced than we were before, that one of the benefits to be gained by visiting Vienna is the opportunity it affords of seeing (after Mars) the most accomplished actress of her day.

LETTER XLIX.

Crowd in the Hohen Markt.—A Murder.—The law of Austria.—Exposure of the Culprit.—Visits of the Public.—Commutation of Punishment.—Anecdote of the Emperor Ferdinand.—Effect of the reprieve on the Prisoner.

16th Jan. 1837.

ON looking from my windows a few mornings ago, I was startled by seeing a prodigious crowd assembled in the *Place*. Half the extensive area of the Hohen Markt was filled by a closely packed mass of human beings, who had collected themselves in front of the large building at the lower end of it, which is appropriated to various uses connected with the civic police.

Had I been in France, I should instantly have begun to pack up my trunks. Had I been in England, I should have ordered my window shutters to have been closed, lest the political enthusiasm of some legislative glazier might have caused a demolition of the glass in such a direction as should bring the splinters in contact with my eyes. But, being in Vienna, I looked fearlessly out upon the

peaceable multitude, and waited without any great mixture of anxiety till some one should enter who could satisfy my curiosity by explaining the cause of such an unusual concourse.

I did not wait long ; my maid soon appeared with the intelligence that a murderer was to be exposed upon a stage in the front of the *Maison de Police*. As I knew she must have obtained her news from my German cook through the medium of the composite dialect in which they converse, I did not feel very sure that her statement could be depended on ; or, at any rate, that all the details she had contrived to collect were of much value, from their assured authenticity.

I perceived, however, that an elevated stage was being raised in front of the building, while the continually increasing crowd showed that some spectacle was anticipated in which a very general interest was felt ; and having at length got hold of a fully-informed interpreter, her story as to all its principal features proved to be quite true,—and a singular story it is.

The culprit is a young man of twenty-two, an orphan, with no relative or connexion whatever but one only sister, two years younger than himself. A few months ago, this sister, who was in service, complained to him that her mistress had been very unkind to her, and, moreover, had given her a blow. It requires no very long study of the Austrian people to understand, that such an offence as this might

make a deeper impression than much which in other countries might be considered as a deeper injury. There is a vast deal of sturdy independence about them. This does not lead to resistance or resentment under punishment inflicted according to law, but it renders them very restive under any correction not so sanctioned. The lower orders are not accustomed to be ill-treated, and they do not bear it patiently.

This blow was more than the boy, in his character of sole protector, could bear ; he took his sister from her service, and, having placed her in another, contrived immediately to make acquaintance with her successor in the place she had left.

It seems that for several weeks past it has been his custom to wait for this girl at the fountain whence she drew water, and observing two or three days ago that several water-carriers, who were waiting, would have to take their turns before hers arrived, he hastened to the apartments of her mistress, rang at the door, which was opened as he expected by the old lady herself, and, having thrust the unhappy woman back into her bed-room, he drew forth a knife which had long, as he avows, been kept ready in his bosom, and stabbed her to the heart. He then quietly retired without having disturbed any of those who inhabited the same house. She survived the blow just long enough to tell her servant, when she returned, whose hand had given it.

Immediate search was made for the young assassin, and he was soon found, at work at his usual place, in a carpenter's workshop. The moment the officers of justice appeared he laid down his tools, and prepared to follow them, saying, "I know that you are come for me, and I am quite ready to go with you."

By the laws of Austria no person can be executed for any crime, not even for the most clearly proved murder, without his confessing his guilt. If he refuses to do so when the proof is strong to demonstration against him, he may be imprisoned, but he cannot be sent to his eternal account with a crime unconfessed upon his soul.

Such being the law, which is never swerved from, and which is, moreover, universally known, this hot-headed and infatuated young man might easily have secured himself from undergoing the last penalty that crime can pay on earth, by refusing to criminate himself; but, far from demonstrating any wish to take advantage of this, he was no sooner brought before the authorities than he freely confessed his crime and its motives.

Sentence of death has, therefore, been passed upon him. His exposition to the public gaze lasted ten minutes, during which time he stood upon an elevated platform, which placed him conspicuously before the eyes of the whole multitude; and, whilst he stood there, his sentence was read aloud from the advanced balcony of the Maison de Police. He was then

taken down, and the crowd dispersed as quietly as it had assembled.

The following morning, however, at an early hour, a crowd again began to gather on the same spot, and we imagined that the same ceremony of public exposure was again to take place ; but this was not the case ; and for several hours a dense throng continued round the door of the building, without our being at all able to understand their object.

At length, however, Mr. H— came to tell us that this multitude, or at least as many of them as wished it, were admitted one or two at a time into the interior of the *Maison de Police*, in order to visit the wretched young man, whose penance or whose privilege it was for I cannot find out which it is considered to be to sit and receive the visits of as many of his fellow-citizens as chose to gaze upon him.

Mr. H— joined himself to a party who were entering, and was led by them into a small room which had very little the appearance of a prison ; but at the extremity of it sat the criminal with his confessor beside him, and before them a table whereon was placed a crucifix between two lighted candles. The priest had a book before him, from which he read some sentences in a low voice ; while the prisoner, whose limbs were perfectly free, smoked a long pipe, which a man, who appeared to be one of his jailers, replenished for him when it was exhausted.

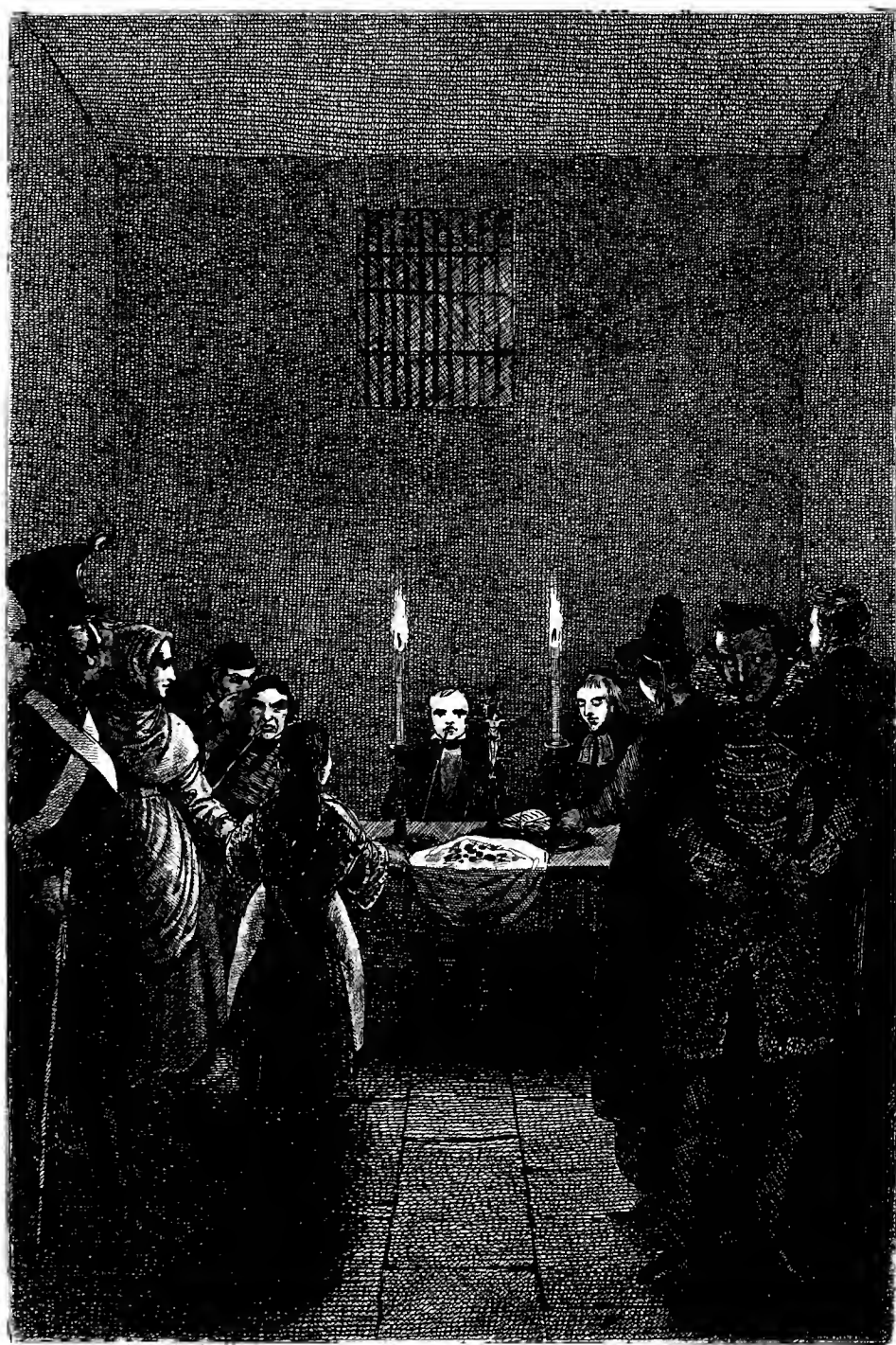
Mr. H— said that the countenance of the unhappy young man has nothing ferocious in it, but that the expression is stultified, and almost brutal in its heavy dulness. He seemed to take little heed, he told us, of the scene before him, excepting that as every new comer threw a piece of money to him, upon a napkin spread behind the crucifix on purpose to receive it, he slightly bent his head to each.

The money thus collected is entirely at the disposal of the prisoner. If he be a pious catholic, he will dispose of it in masses to be performed for the repose of his soul; but he is permitted, if such be his wish, to expend it in eating and drinking whatever he may choose to command, during the last day and night of his existence, or he may bestow it on any surviving friend.

His execution is fixed for the day after to-morrow, when he is to be hanged at the Spinnerinn Kreutz at sunrise. His poor sister is said to be in a state of the most pitiable suffering; and the devoted affection he has so desperately and savagely shown for her, seems to excite as much pity as indignation among the people.

The extreme rareness of capital punishments in Vienna, or indeed in any part of Austria, makes this melancholy story much talked of. It is no exaggeration to say, that hundreds are executed in England without producing so much emotion as the expectation of this one has created here.

No trial is ever permitted in this country to take



Drawn and Etched by J. G. Thompson.

place in public ; it being conceived that the business of the court might possibly be influenced thereby, so as materially to interfere with the purposes of justice : but, when this solemn investigation is over, the result becomes as open as day ; and so far are the proceedings of this most paternal of governments such as to justify those who bring the change of mystery against it, that in criminal cases, as in all others, the most liberal access is given to the records of them.

All the circumstances relative to the wretched boy's case have been communicated to us in conversation as fully, and probably with much more correctness than we get such facts through the medium of our contradictory newspapers. The very general degree of attention which the sad history has excited throughout Vienna appears something perfectly extraordinary to us, and most clearly leads to the inference that crimes so atrocious are very rare.

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In the course of yesterday, rumours began to circulate of the Emperor's intention to change the punishment of death to that of imprisonment, and to-day these rumours are fully confirmed. The perpetration of the crime unquestionably spread abroad a universal feeling of horror ; nevertheless, the satisfaction inspired by this news seems very general. The fact that the dreadful outrage was committed to avenge the wrongs of an orphan sister, and the circumstance of these two young creatures being left

alone in the world, save for each other, has certainly softened all hearts towards him.

As for the kind and mercy-loving Emperor himself, he would have been likely enough to have made a reason, if he could have found none, that might have excused him from putting his hand to the death-warrant of a fellow-creature. The Emperor Ferdinand has never yet performed this painful duty, and it is to be hoped that the happy people he reigns over will spare him a task so ill fitted to his kind and gentle spirit. His feelings upon such occasions may be gathered from the fate of the man who attempted, some time ago, to shoot him at Baden. Not only did the Emperor immediately declare that the assassin's life should not be forfeited, but when the man was placed in confinement, the kind-hearted monarch commanded that aid should be afforded to his wife and children, in order that they might suffer as little as possible for a crime of which they were not guilty.

Such being the sentiments and feelings of the Emperor, it is evidently less a matter of surprise than of satisfaction that the life of this guilty but unfortunate boy is spared. The sentence against him at present stands thus: he is to be removed to the fortress of Spilberg, and remain there for fourteen years; after which, if he conducts himself well during the time, he will receive a full pardon, and be restored to liberty. It is said, that on receiving the news of his reprieve he fainted away, and, hav-

ing remained many hours nearly in a state of insensibility, was found to be so greatly reduced in strength when he recovered from it, as to render him for some time unfit to set out upon his melancholy journey to Spilberg.

LETTER L.

Universal Waltzing.—Sunday.—Children's Ball.—Ball for the People.—No Chaperons.—Mode of obtaining Partners.—Washerwomen's Ball.—Hackney Coachmen's Ball.—Entertainments announced for the Carnival.—Hospitality of the Foreign Ministers.

January 18th, 1837.

THE Carnival is now at its height, and the whole population seems as much actuated by one common and universal feeling, as if an irresistible spell had fallen on the empire, enforcing them all to waltz. They do indeed pause every day for an hour or two, as if to take breath ; but these hours are not lost to pleasure, which, at this time, appears the one sole and only object for which Austrians exist. During this interval they eat, and they eat well. Nay, some of them now and then sit still long enough to see a play ; but they all seem, at these times, as if they were only waiting to begin again ; and I never observe half-a-dozen men and women together, without expecting to see them set off, and spin into a waltz. Often has the remembrance of the gifted

piper of Anster Fair come across me as I have marked the power of Strauss and Lanner upon old and young: and though the exact strains of Maggy Lauder have not danced upon my ear, I have sometimes looked round with anxiety to see in what condition the tables and chairs might be; and have occasionally felt considerable alarm lest my own venerable feet should be seized upon by the same mysterious influence, and run away with me.

Yesterday, being Sunday, the day which all Catholic hearts hail with such a cordial blessing, was passed from the moment the last mass ended in a ceaseless activity of enjoyment to which sober England (merry, alas! no more) can offer no counterpart, and of which she cannot very correctly form an idea.

Of the plentiful Mittags-essen, of the walk, the run, the slide in the Prater, and of all the happy preparations which occupied the intervening hours before the lighted chambers which blazed throughout the city and its Vorstadts called all the world to waltz,—of all this I have heard from my maid, who, having made acquaintance with several English servants here, enters into the humours of this season of gaiety with great zeal,—of all this I have heard from her; but the chief share which we ourselves took in the business of yesterday, was the going to two balls.

The first of these, a child's ball at Prince Metternich's, was the very prettiest collection of full-

dressed fairies that ever wax-lights shone upon. I used to fancy that "*la danse*" was a sort of national monopoly belonging to France, and that no other people could hope for more than a secondary place in the favour of Terpsichore; but the manner in which these graceful little creatures move, proves that one of her best gifts was born with them, for there was not a tiny toe amongst them all that did not beat time to the measure so exquisitely, that if perchance they were out in the figure, they rather seemed to be performing some pretty capriccio, than to be blundering.

I have been often told that the beauty of the Vienna children is remarkable; and if the hundred and fifty assembled on this occasion may be taken as a specimen, they certainly are most superlatively lovely. Fair, but half-faded women, are often seen to bloom as it were anew under the soft and flattering light of waxen tapers; and, little as it was wanted on this occasion, the embellishing influence was not wholly lost on the glowing cheeks and bright eyes of childhood. Each beloved one, too, was dressed with all the delicate *recherche* which taste, inspired by maternal vanity, could imagine: and though I am not quite certain that such lavish costliness and elaborate ingenuity in the article of personal decoration is likely to furnish a useful moral lesson to the little beauties themselves, it would be most ungrateful in a looker-on to find fault with it; for I do assure you the general result was the

very prettiest spectacle that the eye could look upon.

Having indulged ourselves by gazing upon it till the happy sparklers were all seated at supper, we moved onward, for we had another engagement to keep; and, actuated by the restless spirit of the season, repaired to the residence of some noble friends, who proposed to lead us to a scene where this same spirit was in full activity, but among a class far removed from their own.

It is necessary to come to Vienna, and see with one's own eyes a ball of the kind, to which we were now admitted, to believe in the possibility of its existence. In a magnificent room in one of the Faubourgs, splendidly illuminated, and animated by a band of excellent music, we found about five hundred people, all exceedingly well dressed, in the very height of festive but orderly enjoyment. The rank of the men was that of shopmen or little shopkeepers, barbers, journeymen tailors, and the like. That of the women may be given comprehensively by the word "*grisettes*."

The most remarkable features in this gay assembly were — first, the luxury, for I can use no lesser word, of the *locale*. The room was in no respect inferior to Almack's. Secondly, in the well-to-do-in-the-world air of the men, and the neat and very respectable appearance of the women. There were no chaperons, no old people of either sex among them; and the result was such as, if rea-

soned upon, might go far towards banishing old ladies from ball-rooms for ever. It was indeed quite evident that no such restraint was necessary in order to obtain all that the presence of old ladies is intended to ensure.

The most remarkable circumstance of all, however, was the peaceful, well-behaved tranquillity which pervaded the whole assembly. We arrived among them just before the hour at which the majority of the company betook themselves to the gaily decorated supper-rooms. Each party had a table apart, and though I will not undertake to say with how much luxury and costliness each individual table was spread, I can at least testify that each one seemed to be the scene of much animated but orderly conviviality. The party who so kindly escorted us to this gay, and to us quite novel scene, had bespoken a supper which was excellent in every way, even to the difficult matter of wines.

These multitudinous suppers lasted quite long enough to have greatly increased the merriment of any such meeting in England, (if, indeed, any such ever took place,) but no such effect was produced here, not even in the slightest degree. The happy spinners all set off again, with renewed strength perhaps, but with exactly the same sort of orderly enjoyment as before, twirling with inconceivable pertinacity of strength, and chiefly differing from the waltzers of higher rank, by proving that their lungs and their limbs were in much greater perfection, as.

far as strength is concerned, than those of their more elegant compatriots.

The dress of the females was for the most part of white muslin very delicately clean; some as décolletées as their betters, but many reserving the modest fichu still belonging to their class on ordinary occasions. A few aspired to the more questionable elegance of coloured gauze; and a robe of rich but soiled blonde, worn by one gay belle, afforded some amusement to our party, as it was recognised as having adorned the lovely lady of one of them—"a princess and no less," during the last year's carnival.

It appears that to these balls (of which, by the way, thirty are advertised as to take place at this same room during the carnival,) it is the custom for every young man of the class for whom they are given, who is about to be married, to bring his bride elect, so that we are to presume that a great part of the company were happy lovers. It is probably from consideration to the feelings of such, that no change of partners takes place during the evening, unless it happen that some partnerless cavalier should approach during the moments when a couple pauses to take breath, and invite the lady to take a *tour de waltz* with him. This is never refused by the belle, nor objected to by her swain,—which may fairly be considered as one among many proofs of Austrian bonhomie.

A lady of our party, to whom I made some remark on the passion for dancing which appeared

so universally to pervade all ranks, replied to it by saying that it was quite impossible I could as yet be aware how strong and how universal it really was. In proof of this she told me that such single women as were no longer young, a class often found among domestic servants, unable to renounce this dear delight, and knowing, poor souls! that it was no longer likely they should be selected as partners, constantly, and without the least scruple in avowing it, purchased a waltzing companion before going to the balls; his price depending partly on his dress, and partly on his skill in the exercise. A good supper on these occasions is always part of the fee given, which all together, entrance included, often amounts to four or five florins. She mentioned a middle-aged cook, either in her own family or that of a friend, who pleaded the amount of this necessary expense as a reason why high wages were indispensable.

You must not suppose, however, that this elegant display of grisette festivity is of the lowest grade to which the balls of the carnival descend; on the contrary, we have just been assured that all the washerwomen in Vienna are about to have a meeting of their own for the purpose of waltzing all night, an annual custom of respectable antiquity. I am told also, that their ball is remarkable for the delicate "getting up" of the linen worn thereat; and moreover, that if it would be possible to obtain admission to it during the early part of the evening,

this useful portion of the female population would be found waltzing together, as, in order to put their holiday to the greatest profit, they agree to meet two hours earlier than their male friends are at leisure to join them, and fail not to dance without ceasing till they arrive.

Another set, who, I am told, have also a ball peculiar to themselves, is that of the hackney coachmen. If the night fixed for this entertainment were publicly made known, it would be likely to prevent the ball-going of such as use hackney coaches, for on this night each man provides himself with a deputy on his coach-box ; and, as Vienna driving is by no means child's play, a chance coachman might be likely enough to prove a dangerous adventure.

Far from checking this universal spirit of gaiety, the wise government of Austria fosters it, as one of the surest means of keeping the minds of the people from that species of gloomy discontent which has elsewhere been seen to grow in proportion as popular merry-makings and periodical festivities have gone out of fashion.

I have not yet, however, quite decided to my own satisfaction, whether the zealous interest which the rich so evidently take in the amusements of the poor be the result of mere constitutional good-nature, joined to the national habit of fostering and caring for the poor, or of a philosophical conviction that their pastimes are beneficial to the well-being of the country. If it be the latter, they are a set of admi-

rable practical politicians, wise to discover what is good, and steadfast in their efforts to bring it into action.

Of the two interpretations, however, I am disposed to adopt the former. The same tone of mind which produces such keen enjoyment of amusement among themselves, is more likely to lead the aristocracy to promote a similar light-heartedness in others from pure charity, than to generate profound political reasonings upon the subject.

While speaking of the general interest taken in the amusements of the lower orders, the Countess H—, à-propos of some imperial instance of it, used the words “pendant le vivant de notre ange.”.... I was struck by the phrase, but not puzzled by it, for I have been long enough in Austria to know that she could only mean the Emperor Francis.

* * * * *

Engagements press upon us so fast that it will be impossible to record them all as they come and go ; so, to save time, I will here transmit for your instruction a sketch of the fêtes that are already fixed. At court there is to be a ball every Monday. The Princess Metternich has announced her intention of opening her rooms for dancing every Sunday, her other evening receptions going on as usual.

The French ambassador will give a ball every Tuesday ; the Prussian minister every Saturday. The Sardinian minister opens his house every Thursday evening, but not for dancing, nor is this

reception confined to the carnival; and at the Neapolitan minister's a select circle is received every evening, though the delicate health of the Marchioness Galiotti prevents her giving large evening parties this year. This quiet entrée, however, is a delightful privilege to those who love conversation, for there is no house where you are more sure to get it of the best sort.

Prince Wasa, of Sweden, has announced two balls; the Turkish ambassador (it is devoutly hoped by all Christians) will give one; and on Mardi gras, the last day of carnival, an entertainment called "*La Journée*,"—because it endures for the greater part both of the day and night, — will, on dit, be given by a certain Count Nacko, of fête-loving celebrity, which, as it is to include breakfast, dinner, and supper, and as much waltzing as can be performed in the intervals, will wind up the season very satisfactorily. This *Journée* has of late years been always given by the Russian minister, and it is only in consequence of his being at present at St. Petersburg that this hospitable honour is permitted to devolve upon another.

All this, with frequent dinner parties, and occasional play-goings, may appear to you, perhaps, to promise sufficient occupation in the way of dissipation; but it is by no means all that we have before us. All this belongs only to "*la haute volée*;" and though (with the exception of the court balls, to which we cannot go because we have not been presented at

home,) we hope to share in it all, we intend to find time for a little more besides; for being in our character of strangers permitted, if we like it, to look at what is going on in the other *volée* also, we shall have more to do than any body else.

Profiting by this privilege, we went a few days ago to a very gay ball at la Baronne C. P.'s, (having first gone to the play,) and not only was the entertainment in every way extremely elegant, but I certainly saw there more beautiful girls than I ever remember to have met assembled at any party. The dresses were, apparently, all just fresh from the fingers of les marchandes de modes, and many of them very beautiful, though certainly much less splendid than the majority of those in the other set; but altogether I doubt if any metropolis could show a salon, confessedly of the second order, displaying so many lovely and elegant-looking women.

In addition to all these numerous schemes of dissipation which, as I have told you, are shining in the perspective, there is twice a week during the carnival a public masked ball at the great public ball-room, called the Redoutten Saal, which makes part of the Bourg. A very few years ago it was the fashion for ladies of the very highest rank to take part in this amusement; and, as the *entrée* was open to all the world, some very whimsical *rencontres* occasionally gave piquancy to the entertainment; but, for some reason or other, this mode has passed away, and though most of the fashionable young

men contrive to find an hour for every Redout, no ladies of the higher class ever appear there, excepting on the night or rather morning after *La Journée* of the *Mardi gras*.

Amongst all this dissipation one singularity has struck us, and has, indeed, been pointed out to us by more than one Austrian of distinction,—namely, that, with the exception of the mansion of Prince Metternich, the most brilliant part of the gaieties of the Vienna winter are furnished by the hospitality of the foreign ministers. The Count Kolowrat opens his house every Thursday, and Prince Colorado gives dinners, and an early evening reception every Sunday throughout the season ; but these are matters rather of ceremony than gaiety and many are the princely mansions whose owners are constantly seen amidst the elegant crowds in other houses, but who pass year after year without ever throwing open the coronet-blazoned portals of their own.

LETTER LI.

Prison in Leopoldstadt. — Description of the “Cachots.” — Profound Silence. — Labour.—Food.—Discipline.—Cholera.—Spilberg.—Austrian Prisons in general.

17th January 1837.

I SPENT the morning of Friday last in visiting the prison in the Leopoldstadt, which is the most extensive establishment of the kind either in Vienna or its Vorstadts.

The building is large, in an airy and healthy situation, and, as I should have imagined, sufficiently commodious in all ways for the purpose to which it is dedicated ; but le Comte Bacth, who was so good as to accompany me round the whole of the buildings, said that another edifice for the same uses was now in progress, which it was expected would be better arranged in many respects.

This gentleman, who is administrator to the establishment, permitted me with most kind patience to indulge my curiosity by an examination that must to him, I fear, have been very tedious, but which to me was full of the deepest interest. It was by the

kindness of Comte Mailath, one of the historians of Austria, that I obtained the advantage of so every way competent a guide ; at his request Comte Bacth met us at the prison, and all the details respecting it which I may give you, are therefore not merely the result of my own passing observations, but of information obtained from the person who of all others is the most capable of giving it.

His first question to me, after we began our progress, was — “ Est-ce que madame desire voir les cachots ? ”

This word *cachot* gave me a shudder ; but I had screwed my courage to the enterprise, and was determined to shrink from nothing that my conductor should propose. My answer therefore was in the affirmative, and accordingly I took the arm of Comte Bacth, and proceeded stoutly the way he led.

The day was intensely cold, and besides some latent repugnance at the idea of contemplating the cells of a prison, I anticipated no small discomfort from entering places which I certainly expected to find very like dungeons. I soon found myself, however, in a passage so comfortably warm, that I would willingly have lingered in it, for its contrast to the temperature I had left was most agreeable ; through this passage we proceeded, entering, as we went on, a number of large rooms which opened upon it, all well lighted and well aired, and with deal floors as rigidly clean as that of a farmer's wife's best parlour in England.

In each of these is a range of wooden bedsteads, furnished with a paillasse, a linen sheet, and an excellent blanket. Every one of these rooms had a large stove in full action. They were all empty, their tenants being employed in working at different handicrafts in another part of the prison.

I asked the count if it were to these chambers that he had given the name of "*cachots*." He answered in the affirmative, adding, that they had no others in which to lodge prisoners condemned by the state : but that, as it was the will of the Emperor that they should as little as possible be harassed with chains or fetters of any kind, power was vested in the governor of the house to punish any disorderly conduct committed within it ; and therefore, when a prisoner misconducted himself, he was removed from among his fellows and lodged apart with equal attention to health and cleanliness, but with less of comfort. The necessity for such punishment was, he said, of very rare occurrence.

These rooms would have appeared to me to differ in no respect from the wards of an hospital, had it not been for a large beam of wood screwed down to the floor, at the foot of the beds, and running the whole length of the room, which looked as if it were to be used in some way for the purpose of securing those who lodged there, as iron rings were placed at intervals along its whole extent. I inquired of my conductor what its use might be, and found I

was not mistaken. "It was formerly," he replied, "the custom to secure the prisoners at night by fastening round a leg of each of them a chain secured to these rings; but the late Emperor forbad the continuance of this practice, averring that it was the duty of those to whom the custody of these unfortunate people was consigned, to take care that their escaping should be prevented by the watchfulness of their guards, and not by the increase of suffering to themselves."

How the righteous feelings of this admirable man meet one at every point! and how evident is the pleasure with which all bear witness to them!

After passing in review all the men's sleeping apartments, we passed to those of the women, whose number, by the way, to the honour of the sex be it spoken, was very small in comparison to that of the men. The females take care of their own rooms; and whether it be that an extremity of neatness is exacted from them in the performance of this task, or that an innate womanly love of order be the cause of it, it is certain that these female "cachots," as they are called, might serve as models for many a lady's chamber.

Throughout the whole of this extensive range of rooms the air was uniformly both warm and fresh; not the slightest degree of disagreeable smell was perceptible in any of them.

I was next led to the rooms where the prisoners were at work. Many different trades are carried on

there ; and if the culprits who enter are unacquainted with any, they are immediately set to learn whatever species of in-door work they may prefer.

The labour is superintended by an overseer belonging to each chamber.

Every prisoner has an allotted daily task to perform, and if his industry and skill enable him to complete it before the hours of occupation are over, all that he does beyond is paid for immediately in ready money ; one-half of which is left in the hands of the prisoner to purchase any indulgence he may desire, and the other half put by and given him at his departure.

Among the many figures we saw there, I remarked the usual mixture of sad and of evil expression which may always be traced in such a community : but they were all uniformly neat in appearance ; a dress of stout grey cloth being furnished them in winter, and one of linen in summer.

The number of persons employed in each chamber varied according to its size, and the nature of their occupation, but they were in no case inconveniently crowded. The silence, even where the room was filled with women, was profound ; and this, not because Count Bacth entered among them, but because silence is one of the laws most rigorously enforced. The wisdom, and, indeed, the mercy of this cannot be questioned. It certainly may, and must form a part, and not the least severe part perhaps, of their punishment ; but it is a punishment

that can produce no evil effect, and the benefit arising from it is most obvious. How often must it happen, where communication among criminals is permitted, that the young in years and guilt may imbibe the doctrines of such as are too far advanced in wickedness to be listened to without corruption. Wherever such licence is permitted, its influence must be as poisonous as that of an uncontrolled press, under which no degree of purity can long remain unfamiliar with sin and obscenity.

It is quite impossible, as was well observed by one of the gentlemen who accompanied me, that any division, however carefully made, whether according to age, or even to the magnitude of the offence for which the imprisonment is inflicted, should guard against the possibility that the more depraved should corrupt those who are less so, if any communication whatever was permitted between them. And thus, though five hundred persons are enclosed within these walls, the sound of the human voice is never heard among them.

A decent and fitting air of sadness, submission, and penance, is produced by this, which can hardly fail of touching beneficially the minds of those whose weakness or whose wickedness have brought them under the influence of it.

On every Sunday and saint's day mass is performed for the males and females separately, in a chapel that makes part of the building. Two priests are attached to the establishment, whose time is

entirely devoted to the prisoners; they confess them, pray with them, and whenever circumstances, or the wish of the individual renders it desirable, their private counsel and conversation are freely given.

Another part of this institution is a well-organized school, where boys and girls, separately, are obliged to attend during a certain portion of every day, to take lessons in reading and writing; but though the schoolmaster is kept for the sake of the children, no adult of either sex who wishes to share the lessons is ever refused; and many instances are recorded of persons, who have been confined there for a considerable time, having entered unable either to read or write, and left the prison with the power of doing both. "Imprisonment would be vengeance rather than punishment," said the gentleman who told me this, "if care were not taken that the moral state of the offender should not be injured by it."

As we were crossing one of the courts to enter the ware-rooms containing linen, shoes, stockings, and other commodities manufactured by the prisoners, the Count Bacth exclaimed, pointing to an open door through which we saw a moving throng,—

"Ah! les voilà! Ils viennent tous chercher leur diner Allons voir."

We entered the door accordingly, and found within it three very decently dressed women, each standing behind an enormous tub. The first of these was filled with a sort of pea-soup; the second with toasted bread, cut into small dies; and the

third with dumplings, such as many people eat with boiled beef. We tasted of all. The soup, though *maigre*, was extremely agreeable in flavour, and peculiarly smooth and well made, and the dumplings excellent. We also ate some of their bread, not toasted however, but cut from a small loaf weighing one pound, such as each prisoner receives once a-day. The bread was such as might content the most delicate appetite, being, in fact, by far the best bread (excepting the very delicate rolls) which I have tasted in Vienna.

As we stood before these tubs, the male prisoners descended by a staircase close behind us, each one having two brown-ware jars in his hands. In one of these he received three dumplings; and in the other, first a large ladle-full of the toasted bread, and then about a pint of the soup. On receiving their allotted portion, they passed round us and remounted the stairs. Those among these convicts whose cases were the most atrocious wore fetters on their legs.

This meal, with the addition of their loaf, is all they receive during the day; but should it be the opinion of the physician attached to the establishment that any individual requires more, in order to keep him in health, the allowance of bread is increased one-half.

Having quitted the buttery, and examined the different goods manufactured in the prison, we proceeded to the hospitals. The moment a prisoner

falls sick, he ceases altogether to be considered as a criminal, and is treated with all the skill and attention found in the most liberally regulated hospitals. His food is ordered by the physician as peremptorily as his drugs, and, whether animal or vegetable, is of the very best quality. The sick beds, also, are most perfectly comfortable, and as neat and nice as possible.

We had entered several sick wards, but only sufficiently to look round at their general arrangement, without advancing more than a few steps into them, when we reached one at the door of which one of the attendants whispered something to Count Bacth.

“Il faut entrer ici,” said he; and, as we walked up the room, he told me that the young man who had recently been condemned to death for murder, and reprieved, was lodged there. This wretched boy sustained hearing the judgment which condemned him to death, with so much calmness, that many thought it testified the indifference of a nature equally hardened to crime and its consequences. He could not, however, receive the words which announced the change from death to life with equal firmness. I think I before told you that he fainted on learning that his life was spared, and I now found that for many days afterwards he continued in a very weak and doubtful state.

Instead, therefore, of his being sent off immediately to Spilberg, according to the letter of his sentence, he was placed in the hospital of the Leo-

poldstadt prison. For several days he remained incapable of taking nourishment, and looked, they told me, like a person slowly recovering from a desperate fever.

For the last day or two, however, the vigour of his age has been triumphing; his appetite and strength have returned, and in a day or two it is intended to remove him to the place of his ultimate destination.

These particulars having been hastily communicated, we took the direction pointed out to us, and almost immediately found ourselves standing face to face with the object of our curiosity. He was stationed at the farthest extremity of the long chamber, and we had therefore to pass through a double line of diseased criminals; but, excepting the painful consciousness that sin and suffering were near, nothing disagreeable was suggested by the scenes. The cleanliness and bodily comfort of these unhappy people are attended to with a care that speaks much of the absolutism which enforces it.

When at last we reached the spot where stood the young ruffian who had proved that he could both love and hate with such terrible violence, I saw before me a being who, of all the inmates of the room, was perhaps the last my sagacity would have pointed out as a murderer; his flaxen hair, his youthful aspect, and the paleness which still remained from his recent illness, all contributed to give him an air of gentleness, or perhaps I should

rather say of tameness, that at the first glance quite set my science at fault.

Nevertheless, I was startled, more than did credit to my wisdom, when he darted forward to meet us, extending that ruthless right hand which had so recently been drenched in a helpless woman's blood.

His purpose was to take the hand of Count Bacth, in order to kiss it, according to the custom of the country ; but the count drew back, putting, if I remember rightly, his hand behind him, yet without expressing either displeasure or surprise.

Nor did the rejection of his offered homage appear in any degree to wound the feelings of the prisoner ; he stepped quietly back to the place where he had before stood, and met the eyes that were fixed upon him with no apparent sensibility whatever. It was then I felt that his youth and paleness had prevented my first glance from being one of very profound observation. The countenance was neither vindictive nor cruel in expression, but singularly unintellectual and animal-like, — I will not say brutal, because the word is used to describe what is rough and savage ; but no such feelings had left traces on his features ; and I am persuaded that the murderous spirit which actuated him was nearly akin to the sullen sulkiness of an offended mastiff, who will often hoard an affront till an opportunity for a growl and a bite enables him to avenge it. His love, too, for his lonely sister was, I doubt not, consonant to the same faithful but unreasoning nature which made

Byron in bitter irony call a dog the best of friends.

The last thing we saw at the Leopoldstadt prison was the room to which all delinquents are brought at the moment of their arrival; it is here that their own garments, and whatever property they have about them, are taken away, and the uniform of the prison put on. Close beside this chamber is a contrivance for purifying and fumigating all such articles; and when this is done, their clothes, and everything else belonging to them, are carefully made up in a tidy packet, with a number and the name of the individual attached to it. We saw nearly five hundred of these packages ranged on shelves in a large airy room; and were told that if on leaving the prison it was found that the garments thus preserved were insufficient either for decency or warmth, the want was supplied from the stores of the house, but not by articles making part of the livery worn there.

It is in this room, too, that those whose offences are punished by the wearing of irons, receive them. Several fetters of different weights were put into my hands; but, with the exception of the heaviest pair, they were all lighter than I could have supposed such a machine could have been made. Hand-cuffs, with chains attached to them, and also a large iron ring to enclose the waist, with a heavy chain hanging from it, were pointed out to my notice suspended against the wall. These were formerly employed in all cases of murder, or any other crime of very

atrocious turpitude; but the use of them was interdicted for ever in Austria by a decree of the late Emperor, in that same spirit of absolutism by which his reign may everywhere be traced.

“We keep them,” said one of the persons who had attended us round the premises, “as a memorial of the sort of feeling the Emperor Francis had for the guilty and the miserable.”

In leaving this room we were stopped in a kind of ante-room leading to it, and which opened also upon the outer court, to be told that it was here the culprits were whipped both on entering and leaving the prison.

We inquired why this punishment was inflicted after the imprisonment was over.

“It is, perhaps, the only regulation retained among us,” replied the person of whom the question was asked, “which makes the idle and corrupt greatly dislike coming here. Many visitors,” he continued, “particularly foreigners, tell us that the mode of life here is too comfortable to be considered as a punishment; but the general well-being and health of the prisoners is one of the first considerations of the government; and after all,” he added, “those who think confinement a light punishment to Austrians, do not know them. Amusement is almost as necessary to them as bread; but at any rate they none of them like to be whipt, and therefore, as a warning, it is the most useful remembrance they can carry with them from the Leopoldstadt.”

Among other observations made to me by different gentlemen who accompanied us in this progress, was one on the subject of the cholera, which struck me much. When that hideous disease made its first appearance at Vienna, the physician attached to the hospital of this prison desired, as a measure of precaution, that in addition to the usual allowance of food, consisting of the meal and the loaf I have mentioned, and a dinner of meat on Sundays, each prisoner might have a basin of meat-soup the first thing every morning. This order was strictly attended to, and not one prisoner of the five hundred confined in the Leopoldstadt was attacked by the epidemic, though it raged throughout the city in the most frightful manner.

The next time the malady appeared there seems to have been either less terror occasioned by it, or else the former exemption of the prisoners from its ravages led to the belief that the situation of the prison was a protection. Whatever was the cause, the precautionary basin of soup was not ordered; the cholera appeared among them, and speedily carried off fourteen, after which the same regimen was again adopted, and they lost no more.

It might seem that so remarkable and obvious an effect of diet ought to have furnished a most important hint to medical men upon the general treatment of the disease; but it would, I imagine, practically avail them little: unless patients could be found whose usual manner of life was as temperate

and as regular as that of the prisoners, no additional stimulant, whether in the shape of soup or anything else, would produce an equally important result.

Since making this visit, I have had a good deal of conversation on the subject of the celebrated prison of Spilberg with persons perfectly well informed on the subject, and willing to answer my inquiries in the fullest manner.

The condemnation to Spilberg is intended to be *all but* the severest penalty of the law, and is rarely inflicted except in cases where the criminal has incurred sentence of death. It is, and it is intended to be, a severe punishment; but those statements which have described the discipline there as being wantonly cruel, are altogether false. For instance, where it has been represented that the comforts of an unfortunate prisoner, his books, his writing implements, have been withdrawn from him by little and little with studied lingering barbarity, the statement is at once falsified by the well-known fact, that on entering the prison of Spilberg all such means of recreation and amusement are withdrawn before the prisoner enters the room allotted to him.

The food is of the simplest kind, but always abundant, and always of the wholesomest quality; air and exercise are regularly allowed, and in case of sickness every care and attention is shown to the unfortunate captives.

One pretty strong evidence that the barbarous horrors of the Austrian prisons have been exagge-

rated, may be found in the fact, that when the present Emperor Ferdinand came to the throne, and gave permission to twenty persons, imprisoned for different periods, to exile themselves, their families and property, to America, if they preferred doing so to completing the term of their captivity in Austria, three only out of that number accepted the alternative.

LETTER LII.

Dinner Parties.—Arrangement of a Vienna Day.—La Cuisine.—Wine.—Excellent Style of the Vienna Dissipation.

January 19th, 1837.

I MUST not let this season of perpetual visiting go by without telling you something about the many very pleasant dinner parties which make a part of it.

This indeed is a species of amusement in which most countries take a lively interest ; and though the value attached to different features in the social picture may greatly vary according to the fancy of those who contemplate it, that great leading trait, the dinner-table, is rarely considered as unimportant by any.

It is not possible for any city to show more elegant hospitality in this way than Vienna. Dinner parties are more than frequent, they are incessant,—more so, I think, than even in London,—probably, because an engagement to dine interferes with no other. A dinner party never remains together above twenty minutes, or half an hour, after leaving the table.

Where the party has been peculiarly agreeable, I have certainly regretted this arrangement, and wished that those with whom I had dined would linger a little longer over their coffee, or even prolong the union till the hour for balls and routs separated them of necessity; but yet the Vienna mode decidedly has its advantages.

To make you fully understand this, I must give you a Vienna day's journal.

The variations in the hour of breakfast are as great as with us; some people being quite alive at eight, and others courting the continuance of a downy death till noon. But supposing the morning to begin at a rational hour, it may go on rationally, if such be the pleasure of the individual, without in any degree breaking in upon the important social duties of visiting, and being visited. This is an advantage over the morning of London deserving of all praise; it permits the keeping up the largest set of acquaintance, and the most strenuous pursuit of pleasure, without rendering every waking hour of life subservient to these objects. The much-loved (and necessary) occupation of shopping, and that of exercise for health and pleasure being allowed for, a Vienna lady may, if she so will, devote her mornings to the study of Greek, Hebrew, Arabic, or algebra,—or even sedulously superintend the education of her children,—without necessarily sacrificing any fashionable engagements for it. In a word, morning visits are not the fashion here; and, in fact,

occur so seldom, that when they do arrive, it is in the welcome form of a real friendly kindness, instead of a necessary, incessant, time-consuming ceremony.

The complimentary formula, by which visiting acquaintance remind each other of their continued existence, is always pronounced in Vienna between the time at which dinner parties separate, and evening parties begin; and this method of saving time appears to me so extremely convenient and agreeable, that I believe it would soon reconcile me to the early breaking up of the dinner circle.

This is, however, saying a great deal in favour of these evening visitings, for nothing can be more agreeable than the style of dinners. Conversation is indisputably encouraged by the German manner of dining. Their mode of decorating the table in the most elegant way possible, and so letting it remain till the end of the repast, is a very decided improvement in every way upon our system of placing dishes upon the board, which almost immediately become unsightly. The superiority of this method, as it relates to the beauty and elegance of the banquet, cannot be disputed; and its influence upon the conversational powers of the guests is equally favourable. Who can speak, or who can listen well, when the discourse is encumbered by all the details *à-propos* of eating, which must inevitably take place when the comfort of the guests is to be insured by the toil of the entertainers, instead of the attention of their servants?

We have certainly of late years, in some degree, reformed this, but it is to be regretted that we have not reformed it altogether; for I conceive it to be quite impossible for any people, except very hungry hay-makers, to prefer seeing their dinner spread out smoking before them, after being for a short time accustomed to the infinitely more elegant arrangement of a German table.

As all eatables, excepting some few of the pretty things appertaining to the dessert, are banished from the board, their places are supplied by decorations of various kinds. At large entertainments this gives occasion for a display of much greater taste and splendour than can be possible where a score of smoking dishes occupies the space. A multitude of heavy silver covers may give, at the first glance, an air of richness perhaps, though certainly not of grace; but when these are removed, and mutilated dainties are left to greet the eye in the place of them, the beauty of the spectacle is quite over.

But here innumerable and enduring devices are resorted to, in order to increase the brilliant effect of a banquet. Gold and silver plate in great abundance, flowers, vases, groups of figures, and a multitude of wax lights . . . (I have never seen a lamp either on or over any dinner-table) . . . altogether render the part of an elegant Vienna dinner party which is addressed to the eye, incomparably superior to anything of the same kind either in London or Paris.

Au reste — la cuisine, as all that concerns this department of human luxury must in all countries be called, is entirely French ; but the order in which the dishes are brought round is more according to the mode of London than Paris. There is one much-prized delicacy that never fails here ; the *paté de foie gras* seems to be considered as indispensable. Out of twenty-one dinner-tables I have missed it but at two ; and as, moreover, no ball-supper is considered as perfect without it, the number of invalided geese must be greater than it is agreeable to think of.

In one respect a large dinner here must be more costly than with us, for every dish that is handed round must have a duplicate, one servant beginning at one side, and another opposite to him. Without this arrangement, the last served at a large party would have a considerable chance of getting a cold dinner, however exquisite it might be in all other respects ; as it is, however, I have observed less inconvenience of this kind here than with us.

In the article of fish, Vienna is, of course, less luxuriously supplied than London ; though the Danube, among many species that appear to me very worthless, produces some really excellent ; and during the winter very fine sea-fish arrive from Trieste. I have eaten extremely fine turbot here, and most of the dinners begin with oysters.

Except in the matter of setting out the tables, the greatest difference in the dinners of Vienna and London

is in the quantity of wine drunk. I fear the English, notwithstanding all our reforms in this respect, must still appear to the Austrians little better than a set of inveterate wine-bibbers ; and, compared to themselves, they certainly are so. Little as gentlemen drink in France, they drink much less here ; in fact, though they all take a little wine, just as they take a little ice, or a little *café noir*, the ordinary beverage both for males and females is water, and that is taken by both so copiously as to be matter of constant astonishment to us. Beer I have never seen, except at Prince Esterhazy's, where English beer was handed round with English cheese.

Married ladies sometimes venture upon half a glass of champagne, but a young lady cannot touch wine of any kind without very materially tarnishing the delicacy of her high breeding thereby. In short, the most extreme temperance is so universal among Austrians, that the ordinary manner of living in England must appear to them almost bacchanalian.

I was conversing the other day with an Austrian gentleman who is thought to be pretty strongly affected with Anglomania ; he is said, by the way, to ride better than any man in Europe, and has been deeply initiated into all the English *savoir vivre* of the Melton mysteries ; but yet he could not refrain, while enumerating with very amiable energy all the charms of England, from adding, " There is but one thing I do not like I cannot endure their immoderate manner of taking wine."

In canvassing this remarkable difference between the two countries with men who have travelled much, and resided in both, I have been told that it decidedly arises from the great dissimilarity of climate; Britain being surrounded by an atmosphere so moist as to render stimulants absolutely necessary, while the singular dryness of the Austrian climate produces a tendency to inflammation which makes every thing of the kind injurious.

Even the little *tasse de café noir*, which almost meets you on re-entering the drawing-room, is thought *trop échauffante* by the Vienna ladies: many of the gentlemen, however, venture to indulge in this excess, and I observe that all foreigners, both male and female, take it as regularly as ourselves; nevertheless, a lady said to me the other day, while watching me fill a cup with the dark fragrant stream, “Mais comme les Anglaises aiment tout ce qui est fort!”

But I promised you the history of a Vienna day, and I must therefore finish it. After the dinner is over, which never lasts beyond seven o'clock, a new day seems to open before you. If you choose to begin it with the play or the opera, you are exactly in time for either; or if you prefer making visits, you have two or three hours before you, that may be so employed, before the hour of balls or large parties arrives. If a ball is to conclude the evening, it is necessary to return home in time to dress, for the dinner costume is not precisely that of the ball-

room, especially for dancers ; and thus from five o'clock, which is the usual dinner hour, to three or four in the morning, a vivacity of dissipation is kept up in very pleasant contrast to the tranquil seclusion of the morning.

I will not tell you that I should like to live in a Vienna carnival all the year round ; but, as a new and passing scene, it is impossible not to admire and enjoy its brilliant animation : it is, moreover, all (excepting the opera) so very good of its kind — beauty, dress, salons, orchestra, dinners, suppers, theatre, — all, in short, of which this dissipation is made up, is so decidedly first-rate in excellence, that, as a specimen of what elegant raking may be, it is quite perfect.

LETTER LIII.

Separation between the Haute Noblesse and the Bourgeoise Aristocracy.—Manner in which it affects both.—The Chase.—Jews.—Reasons for their living apart.—Their distinctive marks less perceptible among the Women than the Men.—Cause of the Division in Society.—Anecdote.

Vienna, January 21, 1837.

I HAVE more than once, I believe, alluded to the strict line of demarcation which separates the *haute noblesse* from the *bourgeoisie* of Austria in the intercourse of society; but the arrangement is one so important in its influence on the manners of the whole country, and particularly on those of the capital, that no picture of its social scenes can possibly be graphic, unless this feature be brought forward in the description with some portion of the strength with which it displays itself in reality.

It is, however, a very delicate theme for a stranger to touch upon, and its difficulties are increased rather than lessened by having been freely admitted to a view of both sets; for though it is only thus that an opinion can be fairly formed of either, the power

of expressing it becomes greatly restrained. Where kindness has been shown on all sides, it is ungracious to say that one is either better or worse than another.

In all such dilemmas there is but one resource, — and that is, fairly and frankly to speak the truth, as it appeared to you; in the end this system will generally obtain for the traveller who follows it a considerable portion of approbation from others, and at any rate he will never find himself without the solid consolation of his own. Do not think, however, that I would clothe myself in the vain presumption that all the impressions I have received are right; it is not possible even to hope this; all I can undertake to answer for is, that in whatever I describe I will not wilfully be wrong.

I have told you that the noble and boursière aristocracies are very distinctly divided; and I must now describe to you, as well as I can, the effect of this strict division. On the higher class I should say that this effect (at least the outward and visible signs of it) was absolutely nothing. They never allude to the second class in any way whatever. There are no disdainful observations . . . no quizzing of plebeian magnificence no hints concerning attempts to “come so near the heel of the courtier as to gall his kibe.” And yet this magnificence, and this close following, meet their noble eyes at every turn, in the equipages that fill the streets, in the rich dresses that parade the ramparts and dash

along the Prater, or in the theatres where the too scanty supply of boxes appears to be pretty fairly divided between the two sets. But though I have listened to much unreserved talk on most subjects, and have even watched to catch observations on this, I have never, in any instance, heard a word either of admiration or contempt spoken by any individual of the “ *haute volée*” concerning the gay-plumaged birds that flutter beneath them.

I hold it to be no contradiction to this statement, that, in speaking with those from whom I have sought information on all subjects connected with the country, I have myself asked questions concerning those who may be classed as forming the *tiers état* in the community : such questions I have asked, and I have been answered with the same liberal wish of giving information on this that I have found on all other subjects : but never in any instance mixed with the slightest particle of gossip, or, apparently, any personal knowledge whatever of individuals.

Of the poorer classes, on the contrary, the highest speak with the greatest interest, and appear to feel both pride and pleasure in knowing well their condition, their amusements, their peculiar merits, and all the distinctive traits of national character which distinguish them. Neither in England nor in France, and much less in America, have I ever heard or seen so much affectionate interest expressed for the comforts and enjoyments of the lower orders as I have witnessed here.

I am far enough, Heaven knows ! from meaning to question the charitable feelings of either country towards the poor and suffering ; and I have a natural and, I hope, pardonable degree of pride in knowing that the munificence of my own, both in public and private charity, is in very noble proportion to its wealth : but in all that relates to the enjoyment of the poor, distinct from their absolute necessities, I am strongly persuaded that it is more thought of, and cared for here, than in any other country that I have yet visited.

Having told you, then, how the separation between the noble and the banking aristocracies shows itself in the one set, I must with equal freedom, and with equal chance of blundering from not allowing sufficiently perhaps for exceptions, communicate my observations on the other. I must preface these, however, by assuring you, that though my acquaintance has not been greatly extended among the bankers of Vienna, I have met among the few I have known some very charming women ; several of these are accomplished in the highest sense of the word, full of talent, thoroughly well instructed, and with manners that might do honour to any circle in the world But with all this they cannot, generally speaking, look upwards with the same magnanimous indifference with which those above them look down. There is evidently a feeling at the heart that is somewhat akin to resentment at the exclusiveness of the circle above them ; and in

many individuals I have seen it break out in a manner so visible, as very materially to injure that tone of good society to which, in most other respects, they have such fair pretensions.

In this disunion there are two other remarkable features; the first is, that many gentlemen decidedly belonging to the higher class are to be met at the dinners, balls, and concerts of the lower and the second, that if you chance to meet these same gentlemen afterwards, they rarely or never allude to these plebeian rencontres, but seem to prefer any other subject whatever. I am told also, — but of this I speak not as having witnessed it, — that should a lady of this class, who has given a ball over-night, at which jewels sparkled and every elegance abounded, should such a lady meet the following morning on the ramparts a noble gentleman who had shared in the festivity, having a lady of his own class beside him, he will infallibly be seized with a defect of vision, or a visionary defect, and no light that can shine from heaven upon her velvet pelisse and waving plumes will be strong enough to enable him to recognise *Madame une telle*, the wife of *Monsieur un tel*, *Baron et Banquier*.

I am told, also, that the cause of this “union in division” has had its origin in the frequency of the money transactions which necessarily take place between the gentlemen of the two societies.

Whenever an inquiry is made as to the vocation of any person of the class I have, for the sake of

distinction, called *boursier*, the answer invariably is, "He is a banker," and never by any chance are any of them described as merchants; yet I believe that there are but few among them who do not, in some manner or other, unite both. It is, if I am rightly informed, in a character that partakes of both that they have to deal with the nobles of the land.

The seigneur, for instance, of a dozen parishes, whose sheep feed upon a hundred hills, may find the circumstance is not rare in any land that the gold they bring flows forth from his coffers with a stronger impetus than it flows into them; and when it happens that this discrepancy becomes too remarkable to be convenient, the fleeces must be turned into money, even before the shears have done their office. It is then that the bankers of Vienna appear to the nobles as some of the most interesting members of the mixed society; — for they will often, it is said, pay ready cash for unready wool, or they will advance money on timber that still waves its arms over the proud domain, or accept a mortgage even upon the rent of lands kept sacred from sale by the protecting law of *majorat*. And even should the profit of such transactions prove eventually to be more with the banker than with the noble, the immediate convenience at least has been too great on the other side to permit the party accommodated to treat the accommodator as a stranger.

Connexions so begun, if fairly and honourably carried on by both sides, will naturally lead to some

degree of intimacy between the parties,—but in all this the ladies take no part; nor does it, indeed, ever enter into the head of any one, that it is possible they should.

There is one mode in which the Austrian, Hungarian, and Bohemian nobles exercise hospitality, in which all the men they know, of whatever rank, delightedly join, and from which considerable profit arises to those who furnish the amusement. The passion for shooting, or *the chase*, as it is more nobly called, is if possible stronger here than with us; it pervades all ages and all ranks, all tempers and all professions, and nowhere in the world can this amusement be enjoyed in greater perfection than in Austria, Hungary, and Bohemia. The enormous tracts of land possessed by the nobles in all these countries, offer such fields for sport as can hardly be equalled elsewhere, for the game is strictly preserved, and there is choice of ground without stint or end. There is one circumstance connected with these famous *battues*, which is peculiar, I believe, to this part of the world; at least I never heard of it in any other. The game killed on every estate is quite as regular a source of revenue as the corn reaped, and whenever these shooting parties take place, the traders in game repair to the premises, exactly as they would repair to a market, giving what may pretty generally be considered as a fixed price for every head killed. Each sportsman, therefore, brings his trophies to the common stock, and sees all that

his gun brought down sold to the poulterer with no more surprise than we should witness the payment of rent from a tenant.

Profit from the same source often accrues, where the manner of receiving it is more clandestine, and where the amusement of friends makes no part of the transaction ; so that upon the whole I am rather inclined to prefer the Austrian mode of proceeding. It has, moreover, the effect of keeping the Vienna market most amply supplied at a reasonable rate, the quantities of game killed on these occasions being enormous. I will not, indeed, venture to quote the almost incredible total of many a day's slaughter that I have heard described, a degree of caution which I feel to be necessary, in common with some of my countrymen who have shared in the honours of such days, and have had the precaution before they left the ground of making the jagdmann give them a certificate as well of the total number killed, as of their own share in the work of destruction, as without this they could hardly hope that so extraordinary a statement could be received as anything but rhodomontade.

Several of the most wealthy of the bankers, if their religion does not disqualify them from becoming landholders, are themselves possessors of considerable estates ; but I have heard of no instance in which, as occasionally happens with us, the acquired property of an opulent man of business rivals in extent and value the hereditary domain of a noble.

This age of ours is so pre-eminently tolerant, that to express a thought or feeling in any way at variance with its expansive principles would be to run a great risk of being classed among the bigots and persecutors of the naughty old times; it is therefore with fear and trembling that I yield to the spirit of veracity which is within me, and confess to you that one reason why I do not always, and altogether like some of the largest and most splendid parties of the monied aristocracy, is, that I am so very sure to find myself unexpectedly, at some moment or other, entirely surrounded by a black-eyed, high-nosed group of unmistakable Jews.

I know, and I reverence that improved principle of religion which teaches us to condemn no man's faith with any presumptuous feeling of personal superiority derived from our own; yet I have still enough of the old-times leaven about me to doubt if a strong affection for the society of the children of Israel be a duty positively imperative upon Christians. If it be, I must be schooled in the gymnase of toleration a while longer; such indifference is as yet too excellent for me.

Think not, however, that I would have this scattered and mysterious people thrust back one inch towards the state of abject degradation in which the erring zeal of Christians kept them during so many ages; on the contrary, I have experienced a feeling of triumph at the improved wisdom and charity of mankind, as I have listened to the glorious strains

poured forth in their own temple by these children of the wilderness, unchecked by persecution, and offering amidst the darkness that still rests upon them the best worship they as yet have learned to the common Father and Creator of us all. Yet still, I must think that it would be more consonant to a genuine feeling of religion on both sides, as well as to the natural principles of all social union, if Christians and Jews still continued separated, where their meeting professes to have no object but pleasure, and a friendly interchange of sentiments and opinions.

I rarely converse much on the subject of religion ; it is a theme in my estimation more belonging to the heart than the tongue ; nevertheless, I must confess, it would be disagreeable to me to associate much with persons before whom I could not dare, at any moment, to avow the consolatory hope that is in me, lest I should sin against every recognised law of good breeding, and wound the feelings of those whom I had chosen to make my companions.

For these reasons, I should assuredly, were I a permanent resident in Vienna, withdraw myself from the circles wherein Jews habitually mingle ; and as I should quarrel with no Christian either male or female who felt or acted differently, so I should certainly hold myself responsible to no one for so doing, but honestly avow both my feelings and my right to act in conformity to them.

It is not at Vienna that I have first made the

remark, but it has recurred to me very forcibly here, that it is infinitely easier for a woman to imitate the look and manner of those she wishes to resemble than for a man to do it. Is it that, indeed, we are endowed by nature with an especial power to feign? Or is it that an impress once given to the firmer fibre of the male remains indelible, like characters marked on steel; while woman, soft and yielding as wax, easily loses one impression, and with equal facility receives another?

Whatever be the cause, it is a certain fact, that if a Jewish woman wishes to look like a Christian, she can do it, spite of the strange sparkle of her deep black eye, much more effectually than a Jewish man.

I have more than once found myself in close conversation with pretty elegant females, looking so little like the daughters of Israel, that it seems, on looking back, like an especial blessing in this land of general Christmas-keeping, that I did not ask them how they had passed their fête de Noël; but never once has a Jewish man approached me, that I have not been as conscious of his nation as if I had seen him eat the passover.

And thus it is that among many who may be met in the best of the banking circles here, who have happily abjured their stiff-necked doubts, and entered the bosom of the Christian church, the women mingle so easily with the old professors of their new faith, that it is very soon impossible to distinguish

them ; but I suspect it requires, like the manufacture of a gentleman, at least three generations so thoroughly to assimilate the male convert to Christian looks, tones, and gestures, as to prevent his Israelitish origin from being guessed at.

But it is time that I should quit this part of my subject, lest you get out of patience, and exclaim,

“ *Quoi ! Toujours de ces Juifs l'idée vous désole !* ”

and I will therefore say no more about them, except to express my hope that, before twenty-five years are gone and over, all the Jews in Vienna will be turned Christians. They really seem in a fair way for it, for it is quite evident that they take no particular pride in their position, and the converts appear as anxious to forget all their former errors as the most zealous Christian could desire.

How far the large sprinkling (a few years ago I might have said the predominance) of a different and much condemned faith among the members of the monied aristocracy may have occasioned this impassable barrier between the two classes, I do not feel myself competent to decide ; but I think it likely that it has had a good deal to do with it. Where noble birth, and an unblemished descent, are considered as the best and most precious of earthly advantages, which among this high-blooded race is decidedly the case, it may naturally be expected that the upper class of society should hold themselves more exclusively apart than in countries

where birth is only considered as one among many claims to distinction ; nevertheless, it appears to me that, had the monied aristocracy of Vienna sprung from the same classes as have produced an answering race elsewhere, there would be less pertinacity of avoidance in the manner of their being treated.

A few weeks after I arrived here, a clever, lively little woman, the wife of an opulent banker (now a Christian), talked to me very freely on this theme,—the rigorous separation, I mean,—but without any allusion to past or present differences of religion between the parties. Vienna was at that moment almost abandoned of her nobles, and my total ignorance respecting the society of the place made me listen to her with great interest. She attributed this singular excess of exclusiveness solely to pride, and related to me an anecdote which shows the nature of the division so strongly, that I think it is worth repeating to you by way of illustration.

The family of this lady inhabits a large and very handsome mansion, built by one of the members of it ; and they are accustomed, as is quite usual here, to let one floor. This was taken a year or two ago by the widow of a man of high rank whose relations were living in Vienna ; but the lady was not an Austrian, and appears to have taken up her residence in the capital without being at all acquainted with the peculiar regulations of its society. She very naturally fell into habits of the greatest intimacy with the amiable family of her *propriétaire* :

and for some reason or other which I forget either her recent widowhood, or the season being that in which the *haute volée* is absent it was some months before the set to whom she naturally belonged reclaimed her. During this interval my lively friend told her that she herself was quite aware that their intimacy could not last, as her noble friend would find it absolutely necessary to give it up as soon as she entered into society of her own rank. The Countess — spurned the idea, and assured her that she was little acquainted with the depth of her character and the sincerity of her attachments. The weeks rolled on, and the feelings of mutual affection increased; the countess presented her valued friend with her portrait, and no demonstration was wanted on either side to prove how sincere was the attachment existing between them.

At length the trial came. The countess was surrounded by the elegant *élite* of Vienna, and felt, as every one must do, the charm of their brilliant society. Still, however, she had by no means given up her intimacy with her former friends; though she had now apartments in the house of a near relation, she still continued to see them frequently, nor was her manner in any degree changed. She was however much in society, and after some time determined upon giving a ball herself. In her habitual style of intimacy, she brought the list of the invited to show her first Vienna friend. Madame

—— perused it ; and there, among the princes and nobles of the land, she found the names of herself and family, but not that of a lady (decidedly one of the most elegant women in Vienna, though but of recent nobility,) at whose house they had visited together.

“ How is this, countess ?” exclaimed Madame —— ; “ our names are here, and that of the Baronne de —— omitted.”

“ My dear friend,” replied the embarrassed countess, “ not to invite you would be impossible to me ; I owe you too much kindness, and I love you too well but you were quite right in all you used to tell me ! No one can admire la Baronne de —— more than I do but I cannot, I have no power and, in short”

“ It is no more than I knew to be inevitable,” replied Madame —— ; “ but your friendship for me must not be thus heavily taxed I shall not come to your ball, dear countess.” — And so they parted, meeting still, I believe, occasionally in private, but agreeing by mutual consent that their names were no longer to stand in each other’s visiting list.

This story was told with a great deal of spirit, and made me laugh heartily. There was something in the sublime struggles of friendship under such circumstances as amusing as if some worthy Christian were to record himself as a martyr because he went to church on a wet morning. But, in the

course of the month or two that have elapsed since I heard this history, I am perfectly convinced that, under existing circumstances, the poor countess did right ; and that, had she acted otherwise, she would have incurred the heavy imputation of attempting to overthrow the established laws of the society to which she belonged. That *exactly* such an order of things is the best possible, I am not prepared to assert ; but that any lady could with propriety attempt at present to subvert it, I am perfectly prepared to deny.

LETTER LIV.

Ball at the Turkish Ambassador's.—Splendour of the Apartments and of the Company. — Style of opening a Vienna Ball.—Anecdote.

23rd January 1837.

EVER since the evening that the ladies of Vienna en masse waited upon the Turkish ambassador to compliment him on the Sultan's jour de fête, “the society” has been amusing itself with the anticipation of a ball, which they calculated his gallantry must give in return for their aimable *empressement*.

These calculations have not deceived them; the ball took place last night, and a very brilliant ball it was.

His Mahometan excellency inhabits, as I believe I have told you before, the noble palace belonging to Prince Esterhazy in the Maria Hülfe Faubourg, all the state rooms of which were on this occasion thrown open, forming a very noble, though not quite regular, suite of apartments. The walls are richly hung with pictures, some of them said to be excellent; but a ball, however well lighted, is not a

favourable occasion for seeing pictures : I therefore soon ceased tormenting myself by endeavouring to look at them, and having, by the assistance of a kind friend, arranged with the Greek secretary of the embassy the means of paying them a morning visit, I permitted myself to forget for a while the illustrious dead, for the sake of enjoying the amusement offered by the illustrious living.

This long-looked-for fête can have disappointed no one ; we have seen no ball where the general preparations have been so strikingly elegant. From the hall to the top of the staircase, the company walked through a rising grove of flowering plants ; and the suite of rooms, entered after this approach was passed, consisted of six noble saloons, as brilliantly lighted as it was possible for rooms to be where the walls are closely covered with pictures.

The illumination of the Vienna saloons, like everything else in this brilliant city, is done in the most superb and effective style possible ; and the having of late been much accustomed to the soft midnight blaze of their countless bougies, unquenched by the absorbing tints of Italian and Flemish canvass, made the first aspect of the Pacha's reception-rooms appear more rich than bright. But this effect soon wore off ; and the scene showed itself, as it really was, resplendent with grace, beauty, and magnificence.

The Turk's amiable welcome delighted everybody, and it was made doubly amiable by the aid of the

Princess Metternich, who presided for him. The next object that attracted notice was a full-length portrait of the Sultan Mahmoud ; as the taking such a portrait at all, has been considered till very lately to be a sort of trifling with such august features too familiar to be permitted. The picture is placed on an estrade, under a splendid canopy adorned with hangings of crimson velvet and gold, and is altogether extremely well calculated to draw a crowd round it on such an occasion. In this sacred chamber, of course, no other picture was permitted to be visible, the walls being hung with light blue damask ; neither was any chair suffered to tempt to the irreverend sin of sitting before it, the only seat in the presence being the one of velvet and gold, which throne-like, *selon les règles* of all Christian embassies, stood extending its cushioned arms towards the portrait, significantly turning its back to the rest of the world.

If this portrait be a faithful resemblance of the illustrious original, the Sultan is quite a young man, and not without the charm of large dark Asiatic-looking eyes ; nevertheless, his physiognomy is not so pleasing as that of the amiable Pacha who so agreeably represents him in Vienna.

The company last night was as elegant as the fête to which they were bidden ; and London and Paris both must put on more diamonds than they ever did before, or they will produce no assemblies to equal them in sparkling brightness. The Princess Met-

ternich, her fair brow radiant with jewels, and her whole appearance the very perfection of elegance, received the gay crowd most gracefully ; and beside her sate, sharing the sofa of state, the lovely Princess Wasa. We had never seen her before, and had something new to admire in her sweet regular features and exquisitely beautiful complexion. She has been in delicate health lately, and this was the first ball at which she has made her appearance since the carnival began ; but on this occasion she looked not only in full beauty but in full health too, and her presence is decidedly a very bright additional ray in the *auréole* of the Austrian court. She is daughter to the much admired Stephanie, Dowager Grand-duchess of Baden, and sister to the reigning duke, who married the sister of Prince Wasa of Sweden, her husband.

One of the first figures I remarked on entering the room was the Nuncio. The greetings between him and his Ottoman host were graceful and cordial as tolerance and peace could desire. Godfrey of Bouillon might perhaps have shaken his plumed crest at seeing the cross and the crescent so placed ; but, in these latter days, one such ball would be reckoned worth a dozen crusades. Nevertheless, with the full consciousness of this shining upon my enlightened mind, I could not help thinking that a very few years ago the scene I gazed upon would have been considered as having some incongruous features in it. There stood the representative of

the Pope, and there the representative of the Sultan, exchanging bows and cordial salutations. There hung an Ecce Homo, half hid from view by the caps of three Mussulmans who stood before it. . . . On one side of me I saw the legitimate Crown Prince of Sweden, thrust from his country and his throne by a soldier of fortune; and on the other a Prince of Cobourg, nephew to a king who was in like manner seated on the throne of another, while a young Nassau, the high-born cousin of that other, joined in the dance with him. I felt almost giddy, and could have found it in my heart to exclaim "Chaos is come again!" . . . but the sight of Prince Metternich and two Austrian archdukes restored me to composure; the giddiness went off, for I immediately felt that there was still a spot of solid earth to stand upon, and I was on it. So, sending speculations and prophecies to the moon, I again turned my attention to the gay scene, and found it indeed well worth looking at. Many of the noblest men in Austria, and all, or nearly all the foreign ministers in Vienna, were present. It would be endless work to give you a catalogue of all the noble and all the lovely ladies I saw there. . . . One of the noblest and the fairest was certainly the Princess Schwartzenberg, than whom a fairer creature neither sun, moon, nor midnight tapers ever shone upon. In her own style she is as perfect as the Princess Metternich in her's; while the Princess Wasa, totally different from both, is as beautiful as either. Nor

was the fair owner of the magnificent locale, the graceful Esterhazy, the least charming person of the bright assembly; she carries a sort of sempiternal radiance on her clear brow that will long outshine many a younger one but this England knows as well as Austria, so I hardly need tell you of it. And besides all these, there was many a pretty creature more, forming the blooming train as yet uncoroneted, who still wear lilies instead of pearls, and hearts-ease instead of diamonds.

Had you been in Vienna this morning, and received, as I did, a gossiping visit from one who loves to relate things with effect, you might perhaps have lived and died in the belief that the Pacha Ferik Ahmet, ambassador from the Sublime Ottoman Porte, had opened the ball by dancing with the beautiful Louise Princess Wasa. And hereupon an excellent sermon might be preached to travellers in general, and such as see not with their own eyes in particular. The lady who so positively assured me this morning that though I might not have remarked it, the Pacha did most assuredly dance with the Princess Wasa, was not herself at the ball, but received the statement from one who certainly was, and who, I am quite sure, did not mean to misrepresent nevertheless, equivocation followed.

That no such monstrous anomaly as that of a solemn Turkish ambassador spinning in a waltz with a European princess may remain on record,

I will tell you accurately how these high and mighty matters are managed here.

The lady who receives the company is seated apart with much stateliness on a sofa in one of the rooms opened for the occasion. Each person as they enter approaches this sofa between a double or triple row of seats, which reach from it to the other end of the room. To the ladies the fair sovereign of the evening rises a hand to some, "to all she smiles extends;" and this ceremony over, they retreat, and place themselves as inclination or accident prompts, either in these lines of chairs, or on the sofas and fauteuils which remain against the walls; the single ladies however, always separating themselves from their chaperons, as soon as this sort of presentation is over, and retiring, till the dancing begins, to the place assigned them in another room. The gentlemen also approach the sofa of state, and receive a gentle inclination of the head in return for their profound obeisance, and in like manner withdraw to take their standing room where best it pleases them.

The company generally begin to arrive about half-past nine, and in an hour the majority have assembled; it is then that the principal personages make their appearance. When any of the archdukes enter, all the ladies rise, and remain standing till the imperial princes bow, and desire them to be seated. Then follows a little causette of a few minutes between the lady-president and these illus-

trious guests the band from the neighbouring ball-room begins to play the Polonaise; and the Archduke Francis, if he be in presence,—or, if not, the personage first in rank who is,—gives his hand to the hostess, and they lead the way into the ball-room, followed by other couples of the most distinguished rank; and in this manner they pace round the ball-room, followed by the whole company, but in a step no more resembling dancing than does the march of a company of grenadiers.

This promenade completed, those who do not mean in truth to dance, sit down, while those who do, break into the waltz, and the business of the evening begins. In this manner the Turkish ambassador “led off” with the Princess Wasa, who takes precedence here of all ladies not of royal blood; and her right to this is twofold, being herself, as I have told you, a princess of the reigning house of Baden, and consort to the Prince of Sweden.

Thus I hope you perceive, that in this manner the usual ceremonies of a Vienna ball-room may be strictly complied with, and yet no violation offered to the grave dignity of the Sublime Porte.

Two fine rooms were perfectly filled with card-tables, but not a third of them were occupied, though more persons played on this occasion than I have observed before. It rarely happens, I believe, that any very high play is carried on here, and never at private parties. Not more than two or three ladies of the society play at all; and though every

party has three or four tables of gentlemen, it is very seldom, I am told, that high stakes are played for.

Another room had a large tea-table, where, as if by magic, eternal fountains of hot and excellent tea played into every cup extended to receive it throughout the whole evening. In truth, the tea-making here is brought to a degree of scientific perfection of which we dream not with us. In the first place, the finer teas which they get, sometimes as presents I believe, *viâ Russie*, far exceed in flavour any species with which I have been hitherto acquainted; and not only is the tea-urn always kept boiling by spirits of wine, but even the tea-pots are also frequently placed on stands furnished with small flames of the same kind, so that cold or weak tea is a misery unknown. This power of having strong tea *ad libitum*, and always close at hand, without, as in London, having to go down stairs for it, is a prodigious consolation to the *mamas*, whose duty it is to keep their eyes open as long as fiddles speak, and feet reply to them.

At one o'clock the company were requested to repair to the buffet, and we were then ushered into three more splendid rooms these Vienna palaces make those of London seem sadly diminutive wherein supper was very sumptuously prepared. The largest room was literally converted into a buffet, and a noble one, for shelves loaded with gold and silver plate extended its whole length,

and reached to the ceiling ; while at the bottom of the room were other shelves loaded with latent brilliance of another kind, being devoted to the accommodation of unnumbered flasks of champagne. In front of the great buffet, a table covered with every species of delicacy stretched the whole length of the room, but without chairs. This room was chiefly occupied by gentlemen ; for the second apartment having a multitude of small tables in it, all surrounded with seats, attracted nearly all the ladies, among whom a few gentlemen only found places. I remarked one table, however, pre-eminent for its noble company of both sexes. The two young archdukes, the Prince and Princess Wasa, and the Princess Metternich, formed the whole of it.

The third room was also fitted up with buffet, tables, etcetera ; but though between four and five hundred persons were present, the accommodation was so ample, that I believe they were hardly used. In truth, if the party had consisted of tens in the place of hundreds, the attendance could not have been more assiduous, or the banquet more complete.

Among many amiable compliments which passed on this occasion between his Oriental excellence and his guests, one was recorded which I can only repeat to you as it was told to me, but pray believe that much of its eloquence is lost in the transmission.

The Princess Metternich, as I have told you, received the company ; and, in the course of the even-

ing, it is said that the grateful Pacha expressed to the prince his deep sense of the obligation this favour had conferred on him. "Certainly," replied Prince Metternich, laughing, "there are many who might decline lending you their wife for a soirée."

"Were you, my prince, at Constantinople," replied the amiable Turk, "I would not only lend you one but all my wives!"

We returned home from this magnificent entertainment between two and three, but left a large proportion of the dancers in full activity.

LETTER LV.

Prince Hohenlohe. — French Literature. — Lamennais. — Society in Vienna less varied than in London or Paris. — Advantages and Disadvantages of this. — What one may meet in a London Drawing-room. — What one is sure to meet in a Vienna one. — Baron Hügel. — Scarcity of Poets. — Baron Sedlitz. — Baron Hammer. — Madame Pechler. — Prince Lignosky. — Count Mailath.

January 24th, 1837.

WHILE sitting at breakfast this morning, I received a visit from Prince Hohenlohe, and another ecclesiastic, whom he brought with him. The name of Prince Hohenlohe has been for years associated in my mind with a confused mass of histories, all clearly connected, however, with his asserted power of working miracles ; a species of fame not calculated to produce in a protestant mind any great feeling of respect. But it is impossible to imagine any exterior, either of countenance or manner, less likely to convey the idea of fanatic superstition than that of my visitor of this morning. How much of his reputed miraculous power may have arisen from his own assumption, and how much from the vehement

admiration and reverence of others, (of which he has been greatly the object,) it is impossible for me to judge; but, whatever degree of enthusiasm he may have fallen into in his early youth, he is decidedly a man of talent and acquirement.

Prince Hohenlohe, however, is still a young man, and must have been almost a boy at the time those miracles which found place in our journals were attributed to him; but, whatever his state of mind might have been then, he appears now to be both a conscientious Catholic priest, and a well-informed accomplished gentleman. His conversation, as well as that of his companion, was that of men who have lived in the world, yet kept their feelings and opinions sufficiently apart, or, perhaps, I might say above it, to give them all the advantages of lookers-on at the wild game playing around them.

The discourse turned upon a variety of subjects, and among others on the nature and effect of the light literature of modern France. The prince spoke of these productions with the contempt of a man of taste and a scholar, and of their visible influence on the minds, and even the conduct, of many, with the sorrow of a Christian. He said it was evident to him, that there existed in many persons at the present day, a principle of bold defiance of everything held to be good and holy, which often went the length of affecting the appearance of vice, even while still innocent of it; an observation which makes one look with loathing horror on the labours of this por-

tentious school. It is a terrible spectacle to see the wicked encouraged and strengthened in crime by that most deliberate and cold-blooded instrument of destruction, the pen ; but it is a thousand times worse still to watch its poisonous effect on those not before corrupted. Speculative vice, that reasons upon its own nature, and applauds it, comes nearer to what one might fancy of a revelation from the realms of Satan, than anything else that has yet been exhibited to human eyes ; and the free press of France has most assuredly brought forth more than one production that savours strongly of having been composed under some such inspiration.

There was much philosophy, much gentleness, and much piety too, in the manner in which my catholic visitor spoke of the wild wanderings of Lammenais ; and there was much both in his sentiments, and in his manner of uttering them, on this and other subjects, calculated to produce a strong conviction that he loved truth and virtue for their own sakes. In short, this visit gave me another lesson on the danger of forming opinions from all the floating fragments of information which surround one in the world ; and which, like flakes of snow, seem to have form and substance as they pass, but, if caught and examined, melt away beneath the touch.

The pleasure which this unexpected visit gave me was the greater perhaps, because one does not here, as in Paris or London, perpetually encounter,

by some lucky unexpected accident, people whom one has known for years by reputation. It seems as if, by the decree of immutable fate, everybody found themselves compelled at some period of their mortal course to pass a few weeks or months in each of these two capitals; so that those who inhabit, or much frequent either, are pretty sure of coming in contact, sooner or later, with most of those whose names have been made to ring throughout Europe. Thus, while at Vienna the salon of the Princess this, or the Countess that, continues to be in 1837 exceedingly like what it was in 1836 save that a few young princesses and countesses may have budded forth from the nursery or school-room, and a few old ones sunk into their noble mausoleums, those of London and Paris present groups which change with every passing month. Half an hundred interesting personages, who formed the nucleus of as many bright drawing-rooms last year, may be all figuring at the farthest point of the globe this, while their places are supplied by something newer, and perhaps brighter still.

It is, I think, to the fixedness of the one, and the variability of the other sets, that the great difference between the tone of society in Vienna, and that of more mutable capitals, may be traced. All my native habits lead me to give the preference to the larger and more varied circles which constitute the brilliance of London, and the sparkling gaiety of Paris; yet it is certain, that in the difference be-

tween these and the more uniform elegance of the salons of Vienna, the advantages are not all on one side.

If with us there is a stronger and more animated collision of intellect, at Vienna there is less risk of meeting within the arena of good society those whose more fitting place is without it. An *habitué* in the set which constitutes good company here, may venture to enter into conversation with his neighbour, even though a stranger, without any awkward doubts and fears as to the prudence or propriety of attempting the adventure; a sort of happy confidence, the want of which may probably be the origin of that species of *sauvagerie* with which we are often reproached. But in such casual colloquies within the circle of the *haute volée*, none must amuse themselves with the expectation of coming upon a vein that may be gold, or may be brass; for the probability is, that he will come upon neither. Nor would a reasonable man wish for this, or an experienced one expect it. Where would be the wisdom of seeking to disturb the beautiful equable polish presented by the surface of a marble column, in the hope of finding in its centre some atoms of brute adamant, of which perhaps, if found, none but an amateur would feel the value? And would there not be sad lack of experience in looking for the sacred misseltie in a bed of roses, or a wild lion amidst the elegant favourites of the aviary?

Should some uninitiated visitor in a London or

Paris salon, on the contrary, venture upon familiar conversation with any one, or every one he happened to meet there, without waiting for the ceremony of introduction, his chance of a happy result would embrace a variation within every degree from water boil to spirit freeze. He might find himself in communion with the first poet in existence, or the first boxer ; might be exchanging civilities with a mighty silly peer of the realm, or with that peer's elegant, eloquent, and much more illustrious banker. He might be listening to the powerful language of a methodist parson, a profound philosopher, or a tragic actor ; and would be equally likely to have made his experiment on the noble of twenty descents, or the parvenu of yesterday . . . on the most estimable man in Europe, or on the greatest rogue.

It may be doubtful, perhaps, which of these two schemes of social intercourse is really and morally the best . . . but that there is more excitement to the faculties, and more general amusement in the latter, is certain. For all to whom high birth, hereditary dignity, established and inviolable etiquettes, and all the splendour properly belonging to them . . . for all to whom these are essential as attributes of good society, I really think the noble circle of Vienna must be the beau ideal of social communion. Grace, kindness, intelligence, and the most finished elegance, are to be found within it ; and though these high attractions are of course unequally scattered through the numbers

who compose its bright galaxy, nothing ever arises to make one for a moment doubt the high aristocratic claims which all have to make a part of it.

That species of literary absurdity which appears so strongly to have prevailed among the courtiers of France in the days of Molière, and which he has so exquisitely satirized in his "*Précieuses Ridicules*," has left no traces here. The proverbial good sense of Austria would prevent its being likely to arise in any class; but, in the higher ranks, such an hallucination of the light that leads them would be quite impossible. Who that knows anything of the matter could believe in the possibility of a high-born Austrian's saying "*Je m'imagine que le plaisir est grand de se voir imprimer*"? They have no such stuff in their thoughts, and, in truth, are freer from vagaries of all kinds, to which other people resort for variety and amusement, than can be well imagined by those who do not know them. Yet the love for amusement is unbounded, but happily the readiness with which it is found is in excellent proportion to the general demand for it; not exactly upon the political economy system indeed, by which the want of an article seems to produce as it were a power of suction that draws the thing needed from all the region round, but rather from the easy and amiable facility with which the daily routine of a gay, but uniform existence, is accounted pleasurable. A handsome set of rooms, well lighted up, to which all "*THE SOCIETY*" have the *entrée*, will answer the

purpose night after night without fail, though each individual is sure of meeting there nothing and nobody that they have not met before every evening through the season. There is not one of these *réunions* but might, and must, strike any stranger admitted to them, as being exactly everything that an elegant soirée ought to be ; but the novelty-craving natives of the west would soon, I believe, grow weary of Paradise itself, if the happy spirits that flitted round them there were always the same. The moral of the happy valley of Rasselas, the truth of which is so keenly felt with us, would fall pointless here ; and the same spirit which, manifested among the mass of the population, induced Madame de Staël to describe them as “ *ce peuple où il n’y a que du bonheur,*” would lead the élite to remain contented with their lot so long as honour, dignity, elegance, and social union belonged to it, even though neither storm, tempest, nor any other calamity arose to teach them the value of the blessings endangered thereby.

But though the presence of a lion of some sort that necessary phenomenon of a London or Paris drawing-room is not required here in the same manner, their distinguished individuals, of whom assuredly there is no deficiency, are not therefore overlooked ; but their appearance is welcomed rather with the warm salutation of affection, than the stare of curiosity ; and I have repeatedly found myself in the midst of men whose names, at least,

belong to Europe, though they generally content themselves with reaping their laurels at home, without having the fact of their presence announced by any portion of the movement which preludes such apparitions with us.

The person who has been most decidedly lionized here, during the winter, is the Baron Charles Hügel, who returned to Vienna at the beginning of it from a six years' ramble in India, Australia, Van Diemen's Land, &c. He is preparing for the press a work which will soon find its way into French and English, wherein the public will reap the fruits of his singularly interesting investigations. He is a man of great acquirement, much devoted to natural science, particularly to botany; but with an acuteness of general observation, and pungency of remark, that must make the record of his varied travels a great treat to readers of every class. The portion of his journal which he first intends publishing is, I believe that relating to his wanderings in Kashmir, and the dominions of Rungeet Singh, an almost unworked mine of information, which will, I think, in his hands prove a very rich one.

I have repeatedly heard it complained of, as a metropolitan deficiency, that there is no "Royal Society" here, founded on the same principles, and held in the same influential estimation, as with us. As these complaints show that the value of such an institution would be duly appreciated, it appears evident that the establishment of it would be at-

tended with beneficial effects; and *therefore*, as I have plenary confidence in the wisdom of Austria, I feel confident that the want of it will not long continue to exist.

From all I hear, I should imagine that scientific objects would be more likely to create lasting interest here, than studies of a more imaginative character; yet in eye and complexion the people bear a strong resemblance to their neighbours of Italy; but poetry does not seem to have passed the mountains in company with the black eyes, for it is rarely that I have met, or even heard of, any professed votaries of Apollo. Yet, though it seems to be acknowledged on all hands that Austrian poets do not abound, the materials for poetry are certainly not wanting in the minds of the people. That their feelings and imaginations are lively and acute, I might almost say to excess, is clearly evident from the strong emotion so generally manifested at all theatrical representations. *Une comédie larmoyante* never fails to bring down showers of tears, not a few of which I have seen distilling in reluctant drops from beneath shaggy eyebrows upon long razored cheeks.

Sensibility thus easily awakened is unquestionably one source of poetry, but another more effective still may be found in the almost universal propensity to a belief in wild imaginative superstitions. This propensity may easily be discovered, if the choice of subjects be managed with a little skill, in very

nearly every one with whom you converse. Neither age, sex, nor rank, appear to make any difference in this respect. Many, indeed, of those with whom we chiefly associate are too much people of the world fully to acknowledge such feelings ; nay, some, I am persuaded, are themselves quite unconscious of the degree of faith on such points that is in them ; but yet it is by no means difficult to discover that what in France or England would be considered as purely the realm of fancy, is held by many here as that of science.

Among those whose intellect I consider as of the very highest class, I have listened repeatedly to unequivocal avowals of belief in the existence of animal magnetism ; and, to confess the truth, there is a sort of misty vague sublimity in their manner of talking about it, that has sometimes made me wish I could place faith in it myself, at least for a little while. If Southey, Scott, or Wordsworth had ever listened to such statements as I have heard, uttered too with all the eloquence of true belief, and narrating the most touching proofs of tender love, manifested in sympathy beyond the comprehension of ordinary souls, I cannot but think they would have made it the theme of undying verse.

As a proof that such ideas are not merely the subject of female sentimental gossip, I may state the fact, that one of the most celebrated physicians of the empire, whose reputation for ability, highly as he ranks in his profession, does not rest upon that

alone for the fame he enjoys, not only professes openly his firm belief in the existence of animal magnetism, but avows that he possesses the power of using it himself, and often profits by it professionally. I do not on such a subject choose to record personal anecdotes to prove the faith either of the physician or the patient ; but stories have reached me so full of minute detail, so exciting in their mystical unintelligibility, and so honestly vouched for by the enthusiastic reciters, that I have sometimes begun to feel my sober matter-of-factness melting away within me, whilst my ears have greedily swallowed the marvellous tales.

Perhaps, the reason why this popular belief has never mixed itself with the national poetry is, that the faith is too genuine and too strong to make a fitting subject for fiction. But to pass from the poets that are not, to those who are Baron Sedlitz, the admired translator of *Childe Harold*, and the author of many greatly esteemed original poems, appears at present to be the poet par excellence of Austria. We have had the pleasure of making his acquaintance ; and, even had our powers of observation not been awakened by hearing of his high reputation, we could not have failed to discover in him an intellect of the order that makes itself remarked in a crowd.

The Baron Hammer-Purgstall is also a poet ; but his fame rests so much more on his learned Asiatic

researches than on anything else, that it would be hardly fair to quote him as an Austrian bard.

A small volume of two hundred pages has just appeared from the pen of a Dr. Julius Seidlitz, giving a slight and very cursory notice of between thirty and forty living Austrian poets. Several of these, he says, have composed successful pieces for the national theatre; but though this species of success, especially in a capital where the theatre is en vogue, might be supposed to lead to a certain degree of fashion and general notice, it does not appear to have produced that effect here. I have occasionally heard the author's name mentioned when a new piece has been under discussion; but not only have I never met in society with the persons so named, but have every reason to believe that I might pass many seasons, constantly frequenting all the best salons, without ever finding myself more fortunate.

The much-respected name of Madame Caroline Pichler is among the abovementioned list of poets, and I therefore presume that she has written verses; but her fame, which is of no mean order, is built chiefly upon her novels and tales, of which she has published many that are extremely popular: she is an amiable and excellent person, and I have been much gratified by becoming acquainted with her.

Of authors employed on the graver labours of history, I have had the pleasure of meeting two.

The Prince Lignosky, a learned and accomplished nobleman, deeply versed in the antiquarian lore of his own venerable and interesting country, is engaged in writing a history of the house of Habsbourg; and Comte Jean Mailath, who has already published the two first volumes of a history of the empire, is actively engaged in completing this valuable work.

Except the names I have now mentioned, I have met with none known to fame by means of their writings.

The rare recurrence of that species of interest so constantly excited both in Paris and London by the presence of those who have made their thoughts and opinions public property, is sufficient perhaps to account, in a considerable degree, for that remarkable difference in the general tone of society which must strike all persons coming from the salons of either of these capitals to those of Vienna. When also, in addition to this, it is remembered that the attention is never roused by being directed to persons who have just distinguished themselves "in the house" or "in the chamber," a source of almost daily interest during the metropolitan seasons of both these differently constituted countries, it will I think appear more extraordinary that the society of Vienna should be so delightful as it really is, than that it should occasionally appear *tant soit peu monotone*.

LETTER LVI.

Mardi Gras.—Fête at Hernals.—Severity of the Cold.—Beauty of the Spectacle.—Spring Dresses.—Splendid Banquet.—Redoute.—Conclusion of the Carnival.

February 8th, 1837.

YESTERDAY, being the last of the carnival, we lay in bed rather later than usual, in order to prepare ourselves for the enormous press of business which in the way of amusement was to be got through before it ended. At a little after two o'clock we repaired to Hernals, a maison de plaisance situated in one of the Vorstadts, no longer occupied by its creator and owner the Comte Palfy, but hired solely on occasion of this Mardi Gras festival by Comte Nacko, for the purpose of giving "*une journée*," during which the haute volée of Vienna should perch for twelve hours amidst its chambers with a view of being superlatively happy. The rent paid for the amiable and hospitable object was a hundred pounds sterling for the day, including, however, the use of the green-house plants for the purpose of decoration.

The day was as bright as an unclouded February sun could make it, nor was there a breath of wind to disturb the dazzling masses of snow through which the road to this suburban villa passed. It was not one of the least valuable attentions of the observant giver of this wintry fête champêtre, that he had caused the road to be carefully cleared of all the heavy driftings which had encumbered it, so that the multitude of carriages likely to throng it at the same time were saved from the risk of accidents. The value of this care was made manifest by the vastness of the bright accumulations of the sparkling danger which glittered on either side of us as we drove shivering between them.

The cold was of an iron-dry intensity such as I never felt but once before, which was during the winter of 1830-31, at Alexandrie near Washington, when the broad and strong current of the Potomac could not battle with the petrifying power which was succeeding in making a highway across its bosom. Such and so great was the cold of the Mardi Gras of 1837, at Vienna.

“Oui, il fait un froid atroce,” said a shivering gentleman to me before we set out; “mais cela n’empêche pas que tout le beau monde de Vienne veut absolument quitter leurs poiles pour passer dix ou douze heures dans une maison de campagne !”

And so they did: a devotedness of zeal in the cause of amusement that can have been rarely

equalled anywhere. The assembly was extremely brilliant; rank, beauty, elegance, and fashion, all contributed to make it so; and as the Princess Esterhazy did the honours of reception, you may be quite sure that they were performed with the greatest possible grace and sweetness.

During the first hour there were certainly symptoms of shivering; and the Turkish ambassador, who is now, for the first time, entering into the "venerable presence" of cold, could not stand it,—for I watched him quietly make his retreat, followed by his well-pleased attachés, within half an hour after we entered the rooms: but when the whole party was assembled, and the dancers in motion, the aspect of things improved; and the thermometer must, I think, have risen a degree or two above zero.

The spectacle was then assuredly one of the most singular, as well as one of the prettiest, in the world. The *salle de bal* is a noble room, the walls of which are entirely occupied either by enormous uncurtained windows, or mirrors set in corresponding frames; so that at no point was there the appearance of a single foot's extent of sheltering wall to protect the delicate crowd within from the white world of frozen snow without. The blaze of daylight thus given and reflected from the extensive garden that lay sparkling in the unclouded sunshine below, was brilliant beyond anything you can imagine; and the dresses of the many beautiful women who flitted

about in this silvery atmosphere, though in strange contrast to the season, were admirably calculated to increase the striking effect of the coup-d'œil.

I do not believe that a ball given at daybreak within the frigid zone would induce the ladies of Vienna, either old, young, or middle-aged, to appear otherwise than *decolletées*; on this occasion they were so rather more than usual, and this, added to their short sleeves and to the spring-tide of blossoms with which they were adorned, literally from top to toe, certainly made them look as if, in honour of Comte Nacko, they were determined to mock at Winter and all his malicious sternness, and to prove that while he grimly strove to bind the Hours with iron frost, they could make them dance onward three months at a leap, wreathed with flowers, and attended by goddesses and nymphs, whose draperies seemed woven of the tints of the rainbow, and contracted into a more than midsummer slightness of covering.

Instead of the diamonds with which this bright coterie had outshone the flambeaux during the whole carnival, they were now, one and all, bedight with the loveliest blossoms of spring. I never saw toilets so delicately elegant. Having reached the end of the carnival, that great arena for a contest of modes, I am decidedly of opinion that in exquisite perfection of dress the women of Vienna outdo Paris, as much as Paris outdoes London. On this occasion many ladies wore wreaths of genuine hyacinth and myrtle

in their hair, arranged by their milliners with such skill, that by the aid of light wires they defied waltzing itself to displace them. Others had their fair brows bound with immortal amaranth ; while all the rest, trusting, not in vain, to the skill of a French fleurist, were adorned with such a profusion of what looked like living and breathing blossoms, that I could almost have persuaded myself the lantern-like ball-room was a conservatory, and this beautiful method of showing off the plants, the result of some extremely ingenious, new, and imperial contrivance. It was not the lovely heads alone that thus bloomed in saucy defiance of the season ; the arms too were encircled with flowery wreaths, the bosoms were encircled with flowery wreaths, flowery wreaths floated round and about the light draperies in unnumbered graceful vagaries : so that each noble beauty looked like a queen of May, attired indeed by the Graces, disguised as marchandes de modes, instead of the rude hands which usually bedeck such rural sovereigns, but with quite as great an abundance of the gay material that constitutes their pretty regalia.

The colours chosen for the dresses were of the freshest, but most delicate tints,—lemon, lilac, primrose, and pale green, all rendered fainter and more delicate still by the gossamer robes of tulle or gauze worn over them ; there was no shade of red or rose-colour, which appears the favourite hue of the night toilet, but all was soft and subdued to meet the light

of day, with a perfection of elegance and good taste that might set an example to all the toilets in the world.

Strauss and "his merry men all" effectually kept their fingers from freezing by the unceasing spirit of their performance. Here and there in the long suite of rooms a card-table was brought into service by undancing gentlemen; and here and there loiterers might be seen sipping chocolate, and either discussing, or flirting, as might please them best; but the ball-room continued to be the chief attraction, and certainly furnished a spectacle that might be long looked at without weariness. Thus, in looking and listening, the hours stole away; the sun sunk, the snow ceased to sparkle, the waltzers ceased to waltz, and the long string of two hundred and fifty guests commenced their progress towards the banqueting-rooms. These were situated down stairs; and one of them was, I believe, a conservatory. The suite consisted of three large rooms connected by folding doors, the centre one being square, and having an enormous circular table, and the others stretching from it on each side with long ones, all being decorated with a profusion of gold plate, plateaux, flowers, and all that the art of the confiseur could invent to increase the brilliance and beauty of the effect. The whole spectacle was really gorgeously splendid, and the lighting up magnificent. The room in which I dined, and which I think was the conservatory, was hung entirely, roof and sides, with fluted white

muslin, ornamented with elegantly fringed draperies, and groups of shrubs placed at intervals; and as I counted a hundred wax-lights on and above this table, the others being in no degree less brilliant, you will believe that darkness was pretty effectually banished. This profusion of bougies greatly assisted in warming the rooms, and there was no complaint of cold at the dinner-table; but it was not in the power of mortal man, unless the banquet had been spread in the kitchens, to furnish such a party at such a season with a dinner really hot. The entertainment was, however, intended to be so; but, though no delicacy was omitted, it must be confessed that the *patés gras* and the ice were the only dishes that reached us in perfection. I endeavoured to console myself with the reflection that the atmosphere could not so completely have imbibed the warmth of such a multitude of viands without retaining some portion of it, and therefore that we profited by it in one way, if not in another.

The exceedingly fine illumination of these dining-rooms produced one bad effect,—the apartments above, ball-room and all, appeared dim in comparison; for when we re-entered them they were solely lighted by lamps, which, let them be as numerous and as well managed as they may, can never equal the clear pure light of wax.

The assiduous host, however, was soon made aware of the defect, and took very energetic measures to remedy it. Numerous entrées of bougies were seen

pouring in to aid the "ineffectual fire" of the lamps ; nay, so earnest was he in his zealous wish that the beautiful groups should lose nothing, from want of light to show them to advantage, that one of the enormous chandeliers which had been suspended in the dining-rooms was brought up stairs by about a dozen serving-men, and by the aid of ladders and ropes suspended above their heads.

We took our leave while this operation was in progress, for, though near eleven o'clock, we had not yet reached the fête that was to finish our carnival.

Who has not heard of the Redoutes of Vienna? . . . of the majestic hall in which they are held? . . . and of the strange *mélange* of which they are the resort?

This unique species of amusement endures but for a short portion of the winter season, beginning with the first day of the year and ending with the last of the carnival. As lately as a year or two ago, it was the fashion for the very first society, including even the ladies of the imperial family, to be seen during the carnival, sometimes in masks and sometimes without, in the midst of this popular amusement. When this was the case, the whole scene, doubtless, presented a very different aspect from what it does at present. The room was, of course, then clean and well-lighted ; and the masks, however grotesque, must have been of a different quality in many respects. But this year, though during the whole carnival we have heard the Redoute talked

of as something essentially Viennian and worth seeing, I do not believe that any ladies of the first class have appeared there, excepting on the evening of this same Mardi Gras, after leaving the fête of Count Nacko.

It is not, however, very uncommon for the young men, as I have heard, after dancing in the most elegant salons of Vienna till two or three o'clock in the morning, to think the day still not sufficiently carnivalized unless they repair afterwards to these scenes of silent masking and noisy looking-on, where the orchestras never cease to pour forth waltzes till six o'clock in the morning, though nobody ever dances to them.

It is, as I have told you, a settled thing that some one or other of the haut ton should wind up the joys of the carnival here, by giving a "journée;" and these journées always end by the company resorting at midnight to *Les salles de la Redoute*: but it is not those alone who are admitted to the circle for whom "la journée" is given, who assemble there to pass the last moments preceding Lent; every ball, public or private, high and low, on Mardi Gras, ends at midnight, at which moment music ceases to be heard from every orchestra throughout the Roman Catholic world; and it is then that by common consent, and with common sympathy, all Vienna rushes to the only spot where lights still blaze, and there take leave of the gay season by wandering, with a sort of saturnalian freedom, in a mixed mass

of masks, dominos, and lookers-on, till six o'clock in the morning.

In this strange medley it is probable that many a princess may find herself face to face with her *femme de chambre*, or even with her footmen, for the florin paid at entering is by no means a tax sufficiently heavy to keep out any Austrian bent on amusing himself. Wherever else a want of money may show itself, it never appears in matters of amusement; which all will, must, and do find means to procure in a degree perfectly astonishing to foreigners.

For ourselves, in the privileged character of strangers and travellers, we might have gone to the Redouten-saal as a thing to be looked at, any night during the carnival, without in the least compromising our dignity; indeed, we were so often asked, in the course of it, if we had not been there, that I suspect we have been considered as rather dull and incurious from our long delay. The parties, however, have been so constant, and the hour of leaving them so late, that we could never find what appeared a convenient opportunity.

To avoid, therefore, the disgrace of leaving Vienna without having seen what all the world told us we ought to see, we quitted the brilliant party at Count Nacko's; and, having returned home to refresh ourselves by a quiet half-hour, proceeded to this redoubtable Redoute, in time to hear the last strains of the music from its ample orchestra.

To those who are familiar with the scenes presented by the bals de l'Opera, I presume this assemblage would have nothing very remarkable except the magnificent size of the room, and the greatness of the multitude collected there, which upon this evening, I am told, exceeded four thousand. To me, however, it had all the effect of novelty; I never saw masks before, and, to confess the truth, I do not feel much wish ever to see them again. The press was almost intolerable, and the dust raised by it such as quite to destroy the beauty and effect of this very magnificent room, or rather rooms, for there are two, upon both of which you can look at once from a gallery that is common to both. Many splendid fêtes were given in these rooms during the congress, which were among the finest ever known in this or any other country; and, in truth, were they still bright and clean, well lighted, with about one-third as many people, and those of a more elegant description, they would certainly offer one of the most brilliant spectacles in the world. But, as they are at present, there is not much to admire in them. The masks were numerous; and many of them, as well as the dresses, exceedingly grotesque: but wit that speaks only by pasteboard, wigs, and funny trappings, is not very entertaining; so, after walking through the closely-wedged throng, mounting to the gallery, and looking down upon them for nearly an hour, we returned home between one and two,

after the longest day of dissipation that I ever remember to have passed.

So ended the carnival and much as I have been amused by its elegant and brilliant gaiety, I am not sorry for it. I am very nearly weary of listening to waltzes, and studying the arrangement of diamonds ; and infinitely prefer the society found by the entrées permitted me at several delightful houses which preceded, and which I hope will follow, the eternal round of balls. But I certainly sympathize a little with the dancing part of the society, upon whom the change must fall very like an extinguisher.

LETTER LVII.

Austrian Government.—Condition of the Poor.—Education.—Censorship. — Charitable Institutions. — Rural Population. — Allotment of Land.—Simple Organization of the Government of the Sovereign State.—Government of Hungary.—Commercial Superiority of England.

Vienna, February 9th, 1837.

I TOLD you at the beginning of the carnival that my subsequent letters would for some time be filled with histories of balls, and critiques upon fine diamonds and fine eyes; and perhaps you may be of opinion that I have kept my promise but too well, and may think it time that I should attempt entertaining you with something more essentially Austrian than anything contained in such details.

I will now endeavour to do so, but in making this attempt my position is really embarrassing; for much of what I have to tell is in such utter contradiction to the ideas most generally received among us on the subject, that I am well aware a sort of Cassandra-like fate lies before me. I cannot forget what I have learned by repeated experience,

that, great as is the secret comfort of knowing one speaks the truth, the being accused of the contrary is a species of martyrdom in no way agreeable. Nevertheless, I will go on steadfastly in my old way, telling you very faithfully how things appear to me, and using the best judgment I have in collecting from others such information as I believe to be correct.

You must have already gathered from my letters, desultory as they are, that I have been greatly pleased by my visit to this country; that its Tyrol and its Salzbouurg, its mountains and its rivers, are registered in my memory among the loveliest scenes that I have treasured there; and, moreover, that its venerable and venerated antiquities, its noble museums and rich treasures of art, are worthy of the beautiful region in which they are found.

But though all this is Austria, it has little or nothing to do with what at this time most distinguishes Austria from all other countries, and which is therefore beyond all else interesting to foreigners. All this has nothing to do with her ill-understood and greatly misrepresented government.

This theme might certainly be in better hands; but my consciousness of this must not prevent my attempting, as well as I can, to give you such information on the subject as I have myself been able to acquire.

Long before I came to this country, I admired, in

common with all who love agitation less than good order, the tranquil dignity with which it had sustained its institutions and its dynasty ; preserved unshaken its internal peace, and in all things kept the prosperous and even tenour of its course through a period of wild innovation and misrule that has thrown half Europe into utter confusion. But, though quite inclined to believe that these were blessings for which it was hardly possible a nation could pay too dearly, I did not expect to find the power which ensured them so paternally gentle in its operation as it most assuredly is.

Despite the outcry such an avowal is likely to produce, I must honestly declare my belief, that the absolutism (so called) of Austria produces a government THE MOST FAVOURABLE POSSIBLE TO THE LABOURING CLASSES.

Many of my former letters have stated my conviction that, instead of being tyrannical, this government is even tenderly considerate in its enactments, particularly towards those who, in all other countries, are considered as the class least cared for. From his earliest youth the Austrian peasant becomes the especial object of this paternal interest ; neither in England, nor even in Prussia, is that first duty of legislation, education, more strictly and universally attended to among the poor. Every commune has its schoolmaster and schoolmistress, paid either at the expense of the government, or at that of the lord of the soil : and not only is every

child admitted to receive instruction in reading, writing, and accounts, free of expense ; but, in order to ensure their attendance, the children are not admitted to make their first communion if they have not passed through the schools, and regularly pursued the course of instruction prescribed by law ; the parents also, in all cases where this attendance is neglected, are admonished by the authorities, and it is rarely found that these means are insufficient to ensure the desired punctuality : and at any rate all stronger modes of compulsion would be too much out of keeping with the general tone of manners both in the governors and the governed.

This universal diffusion of the power of reading, so enormous in its influence either for good or for evil, renders the establishment of such a vigilant censorship of the press as may prevent mischief from being its result instead of good, an imperative duty upon those by whose will and act this power has been spread. Those countries only have a right to advocate unlimited freedom of the press, whose laws do not interfere to enforce the universal acquirement of reading.

Whether most good, or most evil, is likely eventually to follow the attempt of joining literary pursuits to the avocations of all those whose position compels them to earn daily bread by daily labour, is a question upon which it is easy to imagine very wise and good men may be at issue ; but how any honest man can be found to declare it as his opinion,

that lawgivers ought to render the power of reading universal, and also that it is their duty to suffer the printing and publication of anything and everything most likely to corrupt and destroy those who make use of this power, is an enigma of state that I shall never be able to unravel.

As the labouring poor of Austria advance in life, they still find a protecting hand stretched out to help them ; not in the shape of a poor-rate, for nothing of the sort exists in the country, but in a variety of admirably-arranged institutions, partly supported by government and partly by private contributions, and by a general diffusion of active charity that never seems to slumber or sleep. In aid of the funds raised to give assistance to those who most want it, several contributions are enforced of a nature to be little felt by any, and not at all by the poor themselves. Among others, a half per cent. is levied upon all legacies above one hundred florins, and fifteen kreutzers upon every thousand florins that the agents of exchange negotiate. There is also a contribution in aid of the same funds upon all the receipts of all places of public amusement. Nowhere does charity appear more universally to be taught as one of the first duties of religion than in Austria ; and the fruit of this teaching may be traced wherever sorrow and suffering are to be found. Institutions for the relief of the sick, the aged, and the infirm, meet one in all parts of the country ; and in Vienna, in particular, they are nobly sustained. Asylums for the blind,

the deaf and dumb, the lunatic, the orphan, and the foundling, are nowhere better organized, or more liberally supported.

The condition of the rural population throughout Bohemia, and the greater part of Austria Proper, is such as greatly to merit attention. It appears to resemble, in many respects, a state of things once existing in England, but long since passed away ; and which must be, I imagine, utterly incompatible with the relative condition of the agricultural and manufacturing classes amongst us at present. There is, in truth, hardly any trace left of the race of *labouring landholders* in England ; and though it is vain to lament a change that appears to be the inevitable result of our commercial and manufacturing success, it is impossible not to perceive the connecting link between the simple, contented, and, I might say, dignified tranquillity of the peasantry of this empire, and the position they hold on the soil they till.

“ Your superiority in manufactures and commerce over all the world, as well as in the enormous wealth that is their consequence, can be denied by none,” said a gentleman to me the other day, whose philosophy is of all nations ; “ but happy are the people,” he added, “ who have no need of them !”

All through Bohemia, and the greatest part of Austria Proper, the soil is apportioned in the following manner. The lord of the land keeps a portion of his estate, generally somewhat less than half,

in his own hands, and the rest is divided in larger and smaller allotments among his peasants. The larger holders, called *whole peasants*, possess as much as can be tilled with four horses; those next below them a quantity sufficient to employ two. Among the third class, it is usual for two to join together in keeping two horses; and the fourth, possessing only a small patch of ground attached to their cottages, are called gardeners, and eke out the produce of their little patrimony by working as day labourers; but still having a stake in the agricultural game, the success of which depends upon their own skill and industry. The return received by the lord of the soil for the portion of his property thus held by the peasants, is a stipulated quantity of labour to be performed by themselves and their horses upon the land of which he retains the possession. In some cases this rate of labour is commuted for rent, or a portion of the produce of their farms. The peasants have also to lodge troops in their passage through the country, and to lend their horses for a stipulated distance, for the purpose of assisting their march. The eldest sons of these landholding peasants are exempt from conscription, and the law of majorat brings the property held by their ancestors as certainly to them, as to the heir of the noblest house in the empire. The lands are, in fact, completely their own, the lord of the soil having no power to sell them. Should the direct heir fail, and a collateral branch inherit, something in the way of a fine is paid

to the state. The last division of land was settled in the reign of Maria Theresa.

Everything likely to contribute to the moral improvement of the poor is everywhere made matter of careful legislation, and of attention both private and public. Do honest hardworking artisans fall into distress? There is a society formed to convey assistance to them at their own dwellings. Has a servant been distinguished by long and faithful service? There are prizes instituted to reward it, which are bestowed with every circumstance that can denote the respect and esteem felt for them. Do the children of indigent parents show a pre-eminent attention to their studies? They are not only rewarded by prizes, but receive such effectual assistance as may benefit their future condition in life.

There is, too, another point in which the interests of the poor are guarded with a care unequalled elsewhere, namely, in their remarkable freedom from indirect taxation. The necessities of life are cheap in Austria, not so much from the fertility of the soil, as from the lightness of taxation. In Vienna itself there is, as in Paris, a small tax paid upon provisions on entering the town; but in the villages the loaf earned by industry is less curtailed by legislation than in almost any other country whatever.

That the treasury of the state should be comparatively poor is the inevitable consequence of this watchfulness for the interests of the great mass of

consumers, and this poverty of the exchequer is undeniably a check and a disadvantage to the empire at large ; but nothing, no object however glorious, short of the safety of the country, is considered by this absolute government as cause sufficient to justify the laying on any tax that should bear on the labouring poor.

This word ‘absolute,’ as applied to government, appears to be always uttered as if synonymous with ‘tyrannical,’ and for this reason I would prefer to use the epithet ‘simple,’ as contradistinguished from ‘complicated,’ in speaking of the political institutions of Austria ; for this word, in truth, conveys an idea really descriptive of their peculiar construction, whereas ‘absolute’ may be applied with equal propriety to many others, and cannot therefore assist in explaining the particular nature of this. In point of fact, power is and must be absolute wherever it is permitted to exist, whether emanating from a republic, a constitution, or a simple monarchy. Is not the power absolute which in the United States condemns a man to solitary imprisonment for life, and which in England sends him to the gallows ? It must matter little to either unhappy wretch after what fashion his doom has been pronounced.

It is not, however, on this point that I wish to descant nor am I at all more likely than any other true-hearted English subject to advocate any form of government whatever, in preference to that under which my own country flourished so gloriously

in times past. The memory of the English constitution, such as I was taught to understand it in the days of my youth, must for ever prevent my preferring the theory of any other. But what I have now to do is, to make you understand, as well as I am able, the nature of this absolutism, of which we have heard so much, and how it works.

When I think of the intricacy of other constitutions, and of the multitude of wheels within wheels which must be set in motion, regulated, and kept in order, elsewhere, before the business of the executive can go forward, I cannot but admire the simplicity of the machinery by which the affairs of Austria are governed.

That part of the administration which with us would be called the ministry, is here divided into bodies having the appellation of colleges; these are presided over by persons appointed by the Emperor, bearing the title of chancellors or presidents, and they constitute the authority highest in rank after that of the Emperor himself; deliberating among themselves on all subjects most vitally important to the internal and external policy of the empire, in the same manner as our own privy council; with this difference, that what is decided upon in the Austrian council becomes law by virtue of that decision, without undergoing the ceremony, as with us, of having the matter talked over, and ostensibly examined in parliament.

Besides these colleges, there is an organized

council, which is called the council of state, whose duty it is to watch over the operations of the laws; they execute no judicial functions themselves, but are solely occupied in consulting on any points upon which executive difficulties may arise, and in taking care that no judicial decisions shall unjustly press upon the people.

There is, moreover, a deliberative body, called the conference, in which, under the direction of the monarch, the examination and definitive arrangement of all state affairs is finally centred. This body was, I believe, originally established by the late Emperor Francis, and has been organized anew under the present Emperor. Of this conference, at the present time, the Archduke Francis Charles and the Archduke Louis, Prince Metternich, minister for foreign affairs, and minister of state and conference, and Count Kolowrath, in his quality of minister of state and conference, are permanent members; the other members, who serve in rotation, being chosen from the councillors of state, and the chancellors and presidents of the council. At this conference the Archduke Louis (uncle to the reigning monarch) presides, unless the Emperor be present in person.

There is nothing in this system, as it appears to me, at all resembling that sort of unchecked power which, emanating from the arbitrary will and fallible judgment of ONE MAN, is likely to lead to tyranny or injustice. On the contrary, a very

cautious arrangement seems made to ensure the deliberative wisdom (not indeed of a popular assembly, but) of the men first in station, and first in reputation, upon every act of foreign or domestic policy affecting the interests of the country; and I can imagine it very possible that many reflective persons might be found, as fond of freedom as the Red Indians themselves, who might fancy this system of holding counsel amongst the chiefs alone, quite as likely to produce it as the more modern scheme of governing by Tail law.

The government of Hungary is of less simple machinery than that of the sovereign state. She has a constitution completely independent of the Austrian empire; and there exists no power of appeal from the judgment of her courts to that of any court in Vienna. The Emperor possesses the power to pardon in criminal cases, but in civil ones he can do nothing. Hungary can neither be taxed by Austria, nor can her troops be levied by any authority but her own. Her tariff also is settled by herself. All these sound like high and mighty privileges; but I believe it may be doubted whether her real prosperity would not be promoted, did her rich and broad territory know no other laws than those which so mildly and steadily govern the sovereign state.

It is not so easy for a stranger to become acquainted with the practical routine of the courts of justice here, as with us, for no trials are carried

on in public ; but I have been repeatedly told by persons not belonging to the class of rulers, but of the ruled, that in no country of the world are the laws administered with more deliberative and cautious attention to justice than in Austria.

Although no courts are open to the public while trials are pending, the records of them are all preserved and easily accessible ; every person who can find a respectable Austrian to introduce him, being permitted to study these records, and the other archives of the empire, with perfect freedom and convenience.

Besides the accusation of tyranny, which I hold to be altogether false and unfounded, the gossips of Europe bring another charge against Austria, that has I think more show of truth than the former. They reproach her with originating, and even adopting, improvements reluctantly. But those whose wisdom watches over the welfare of the country, would not, perhaps, be at a loss, were they required to "show cause" for the caution with which innovations are adopted, and improvements acknowledged to be such. The vital principle of some countries is to destroy, that of Austria is to preserve ; and the inevitable consequence of this is, that changes, which are readily and suddenly welcomed elsewhere, are here kept at arm's length till they are proved to be good.

It is undeniable that all speculative improvements in this country are brought about very deliberately ;

and it is for this reason, perhaps, that, when once introduced, they are always successful. When an individual, or set of individuals, desire to commence some expensive undertaking, such as the construction of a rail-road, the establishment of steam-vessels, or the like, the consent of the government is withheld till careful and minute information has been obtained as to its probable success, and the effect likely to be produced by it on the interests of other individuals. If the result of this investigation be clearly favourable, the permission is granted; if the contrary, it is refused: and the consequence is, that very few attempts at improvement are ever known to fail.

It is certain, however, that the progressive movement of England in all things which regard manufactures, and, in fact, in everything connected with that extensive branch of human affairs comprehended in the modern phrase "*développement industriel*," has been more rapid than that of any other country, and has carried her farther in the acquirement of wealth, and all the wide-spreading power that wealth bestows.

That this pre-eminence is a good, it would be very bold to deny; but it is a good, like every other having its beginning and end in this life, very decidedly chequered with evil.

When strangers who visit England—not as seen in London, but in the provinces—pronounce the wants and sufferings of the poor to be greater there

than can be found in any other land, they point to the black squares in this chequer.

That poverty and suffering should be the result of industry, is an assertion which sounds very like a paradox; yet no one who has given much attention to the immediate effects produced by the presence of extensive manufactories can deny its truth. Extend the view taken of its effects, and the immediate misery will be lost sight of in the splendid accession of wealth, which is its ultimate result, as completely as the sordid manure, which rots around the germ, is forgotten while we gaze at the brilliant blossom that springs from it yet certain it is, that both germ and blossom are parts of the same plant.

In Austria there are no crowded ports like those of London and Liverpool, whence thousands of vessels annually carry the fruits of native industry to the four quarters of the globe, and return freighted with the means of luxury unequalled; but neither can there be found in Austria thousands of pale attenuated children, whose young muscles have been strained to convert cotton into gold.

It is not difficult to perceive that "reasons, plenty as blackberries," may be found by the partisans of both systems to prove that each was "wisest, discreetest, best" and it is also quite possible that both parties may be right; for what may be highly advantageous and desirable for one race, may be very much the contrary for another; moreover,

it is not necessary that either set of reasoners should decide the question for both. Austria and England, therefore, may each pursue their very different course without its being at all demonstrable that either is going wrong.

There are various other points of difference between us speculations upon which would lead me farther than I have now time to go ; but it is probable they would all lead to the same conclusion, namely, that what is good or even needful for the one, might be prejudicial or destructive for the other.

LETTER LVIII.

La Crème.

February 11th, 1837.

IN my last letter I "plunged you deep" in politics, and now, to restore your nerves, I will take you back again to a little gossip; for I perceive that though I must have made manifest to your understanding the distinction between Jews and Christians, nobles and bankers, first aristocracy and second aristocracy, haute volée, and volée pas si haute, I have omitted to mention another quite as remarkable as either, and one which, if well made use of, may tend to make a long ball seem a short one, even to those who make only *la tapisserie* of it.

In explaining to you this sub or rather super division of parties, I must premise that before you can mark its workings you must place yourself within the circle of the very highest aristocracy, and by no means fancy that from any other point it can be perceptible; for it is in truth

"Part of the first, like coats in heraldry,"

and can only be comprehended by those who have,

in some degree, been initiated into “ the differences.”

This super-division, then, of the brilliant beau monde of this elegant capital shall be introduced to you by the style and title they have chosen for themselves ; they have, by their own appointment, taken the sobriquet of “ *La Crème*,”—an expressive phrase enough, requiring, from its aptness, little or no explanation, and wanting only a few details as to the manner in which its application is acquired and retained.

Among those whose rank and fortune place them in the highest class of society, there are here, as indeed with us also, a clique who (it may be from inherent humility) do not consider their noble birth and elevated position of sufficient importance to found thereon any claims to distinction ; deeming them, both in themselves and others, insufficient to the obtaining that place among their fellow-mortals which it is their wish to hold. In London these humble-minded people call themselves *ton*, and in Vienna *crème* ; which latter appellation I strongly recommend to our English exclusives as being, if I may again use the language of heraldry, infinitely more “ canting ” than the other.

In the more essential principles of their separate existences the two sets may fairly be classed as the same, and it is only in the minor points of tactics and discipline that such varieties may be remarked

in the one, as it may be profitable to point out to the other.

There is a natural frankness and *bonne foi* in the Austrian character, which does not totally leave them even in the most trying and artificial state of society ; and I hold it to be a proof of this, that among the set of which I am speaking, instead of tacitly demonstrating their exclusive pretensions merely by such little social impertinences as none but themselves would practise, they honestly bring forward their claims by loudly and distinctly proclaiming “ *Nous sommes la crème !*” Nay, a few spirits, more honest and more candid still, take up the strain at least an octave higher, and say “ *Nous sommes la crème de la crème.*”

There is nothing very extraordinary or out of the natural course of things in this wish to form a clique, or tribe, or clan, apart ; for it demonstrates only the same species of party spirit that may be traced through all creation, sometimes producing good effects, sometimes bad, and sometimes very nearly none at all ; for wherever individuals thus forming themselves into a phalanx are of no great consequence either single or en masse, the mere act of congregating is not important. Neither is it by any means wonderful that a dozen or two idle ladies and gentlemen, who have no very extensive field of amusement, should agree to caress themselves and each other, swear alliance offensive and defensive,

and call themselves “la crème;” but I do think it is a little extraordinary that those who are not thus sworn should lament their exclusion so piteously as some of them do here.

I heard the other day of a lady of very noble birth and ample revenues, who has this year brought out, as we call it, her only daughter and heiress, and truly the young countess’s position in society might be accounted by the ignorant as very happily ascertained; but her anxious mother, it seems, knows better, and lately told a lady of my acquaintance that she would gladly pay one-third of her income, could she thereby ensure for her daughter immediate admission to “la crème.” Another tender mother, whom we know, has also been seized with this crème fever, which torments her sorely, and in a little confidential tête-à-tête communion with which she indulged me yesterday, she thus expressed herself:—“I would consent,” said she, almost with tears in her eyes,—“I would consent to do *anything* that could be proposed to me, could I at once see my daughters *de la crème* Ah! c’est impossible pour une étrangère d’imaginer ce que c’est!”

Of all the blessings to which the cabalistic entrée to this sect may admit its votaries, I may safely venture, as *étrangère*, to confess my ignorance; but it brings with it some penalties which are more obvious, and which certainly appear of some severity.

I know one gentleman, an animated clever young man, who has the honour of being permitted to call

himself crème. . . . Upon a recent occasion, at one of the balls of the carnival, he was seen to be in conversation with a very pretty girl, who was not only of high Austrian blood, but allowed to be one of the loveliest of the unmarried belles adorning the salons of this season; . . . yet, nevertheless, she was not of "la crème." When the young man, having finished his discourse with her, turned away, three middle-aged married dancing ladies, "crème de la crème," approached and fairly surrounded him.

"Have you asked the Countess **** de **** to dance?" inquired one of them.

"Yes, I have!" was the bold reply.

"You positively must not dance with her!" cried the three creamy fair ones in a breath. . . . "at least, if you do, you will cease to be one of us."

The absolutism of Austria is much less terrible at the chancellerie than with la crème. What would six months at Spilsberg be, compared to this threatened banishment? . . . The young man bent in submissive obedience, only adding to his declaration of it this question,

"What am I to say to her?"

"Say to her!" exclaimed one of the trio, . . . a short round lady of thirty-six, pitted with the small-pox, and of very doubtful credit of any kind, excepting crème credit—

"What are you to say to her? . . . say that you are engaged to dance with me."

The young man looked enchanted of course, mut-

tered something about a mistake to the fair young girl, and the next moment felt himself in possession of the full-blown honour and glory of spinning round the room with one of the ugliest women in it.

I will add one anecdote more, also of very recent occurrence, and then take leave of this curious galaxy, this newly discovered *via lactea*. The scene of it was the ball-room of the court, where the company were dancing one of those cotillons in which partners separate for a while, all addressing themselves, as fancy or frolic may lead them, to any other in the set, or sometimes even out of it, to make a *tour de waltz*. A young lady, who for the first time in her life was enjoying the honour of dancing in the presence of the Empress, but who has not been elected *crème*, in the thoughtless and indiscriminating gaiety of her heart presented her outstretched hands to a gentleman who was.

He stared at her for a moment in unmeasured amazement, and then dropped his eyes, and remained motionless as a petrified statue. The poor blushing girl turned to a second, but for her sins, poor child! he too was *crème de crème*.

“Moi!” he uttered with a sort of hysteric laugh, and, turning away, sheltered himself in earnest conversation with a lady of the clique who stood next to him.

That such things are, and are a spot upon the otherwise very elegant society, is certain, but the sun too has its spots; and though I could not, consist-

ently with my system of unshrinking sincerity, omit to mention what was too conspicuous to be overlooked, I must in the same spirit assure you that it is possible to come very constantly in contact with this coterie, without being in any degree annoyed by it. Many of them, indeed, seem to belong to it rather from election than choice, and, kindly keeping its mysteries invisible, permit themselves to be as agreeable as if wholly ignorant that their place was within its narrow pale. Even the worst of their foolish little cabalistic vagaries are not much calculated, I should think, to give pain to any ; and as it is evident that they derive great pleasure from the whole arrangement themselves, it would show little benevolence, and in fact be in very wicked opposition to the "greatest happiness" system, to desire its abolition. All their *mignardises* are but a cypher in which they say flattering things to each other ; and if it be left unexamined and unexplained, nobody will find out that towards the rest of the world they are less affectionate.

Young ladies, indeed, had better learn who's who, before they dance in a cotillon ; and persons with delicately constituted organs of hearing will do well not to approach the set too nearly when congregated for social enjoyment, as an almost preternatural exaltation of the voice into a sharp shrill scream in addressing each other, is the great external symbol of the clique ; and to this they all, but particularly the ladies, appear to attach the greatest importance :

but, à cela près, this *crème*, notwithstanding that it is a little indurated, is by no means a sufficiently prominent excrescence to destroy, though it may a little blemish, the fine polish of the really delightful society of Vienna.

This polish, by the way, is of the brightest quality, too much so to be easily destroyed ; but for that very reason the least violation of it is the more perceptible. In no society can there be found a tone more entirely and beautifully devoid of affectation than in that of Vienna. It should seem that this deplorable weakness is absolutely unknown to them ; for in no single instance, even among la *crème de la crème*, do I remember to have seen any symptom of that vile disfiguring species of mannerism which arises from attempts to be more graceful, more gay, or more gifted, in some way or other, than God intended.

It is to this delightful peculiarity, I suspect, that they owe the great charm of their dancing. Were the fantastic tricks with heads, limbs, and features, which so frequently torment lookers-on elsewhere, seen to accompany the eternal waltz here, it would be intolerable ; but, instead of this, the pretty little feet so naturally beat time, and the whole person is so unaffectedly abandoned to the harmonious movement (for such it is) without the discord of a single grimace, that the watching them is one of the most soothing occupations imaginable.

This freedom from affectation pervades every part

of their deportment from "timid youth to reverend age," and unquestionably forms one of the greatest charms of the splendid circle.

An anecdote, by the way, recurs to me at this moment, which is just now in universal circulation here ; and it is sufficiently germane to the matter of *la crème* to justify my repeating it in a letter dedicated to the subject.

A gentleman of the *society*, but not yet established as *crème*, is said to be extremely desirous of obtaining "une charge à la cour," the symbol of which is a key. In order to draw golden opinions from all kinds of men, and, what is of greatly more consequence in such affairs, from all women likewise, he has been giving so magnificent an entertainment that the portion of Vienna which in every capital bears the appellation of "all the world," long talked of nothing else ; for you must not suppose that the creamy clique are so besotted by the fumes of their own greatness as to refuse to accept invitations from those who do not belong to it. Indeed, if this were their system, their opportunities of doing honour to their milliners and tailors would be greatly restricted ; for I have heard it remarked that, generally speaking, the heroes and heroines of *la crème* are much more in the habit of accepting invitations than of giving them.

But to proceed The publication of personal caricatures is not permitted in Austria. Witty malice, however, is too subtle an essence to be hermetically

sealed by any police that ever was invented ; it will whiz out a little here and there, sometimes in the form of an epigram, sometimes in that of a sketch, circulated, though not published.

Something of the latter species has recently appeared here, the application of which is not difficult. The drawing represents a high, straight, and polished pole, sufficiently hard to climb, which rears itself in the foreground ; on its summit is stuck a golden key, and around its base spreads a circular dish filled to the brim with what looks like the rich white liquid that is named in this city to designate what is understood to be the emblem of heaven upon earth. About one-third up the slippery pole the figure of a man is seen to cling, straining with all his might to reach the top, and clutch the precious key. There is just enough doubt, in the position and attitude, as to whether he will ever reach the top, to make it a good sporting question. The pithy device inscribed below is this—

“ S’il ne parviendrait pas à son but, au moins il tombera dans la crème.”

We have the verse of an old song, now almost passed into a proverb, that may help to explain the gusto with which this little bit of *méchanceté* has been received—

“ Stolen pleasures sure are sweet.”

LETTER LIX.

The Princess Metternich.—Anecdotes recounted by her of the Emperor Francis.

16th February 1837.

I WISH some clever capable Austrian would bring out a book containing all the personal anecdotes on record concerning the late Emperor. I would have it written without any political object whatever, and not as matter of history, but of that delightful species of biography which brings its subject home to the very heart of the reader. This great and good man should, for the honour of humanity, be as thoroughly known as possible. No doubt the life of the Emperor Francis, the second of Germany, and the first of Austria, treated by the pen of an able historian, would—and will—be one of the most interesting and the most important works that this age of interest could furnish; but the wish I have now expressed is for a less dignified production, and need not await the ripening process of years before it meets the day.

Never surely did any man pass through so long

a career, leaving so much of good and so little of evil attached to his memory, as this beloved and regretted Emperor. Did not the universal voice which still makes his living monument burst forth on all sides so spontaneously as to shew that it is impulse, and not design, which gives it breath, one might really suppose the whole nation had entered into a conspiracy to persuade the world that he was the holiest Christian, the most faultless man, and the most beloved monarch that ever lived and died. As it is, however, the impression left upon me is, that truly he was all that the ruler of a nation ought to be. The benevolence of his nature made itself felt from the daily kindness of his simplest intercourse with every one who approached him, up to the formation of institutions to alleviate all the ills of humanity, and the systematic abolition of everything that pushed punishment to severity. He seems throughout the whole of his long reign never to have lost that conscientious feeling of responsibility which is the strongest check upon the passions, and the surest guarantee against injustice, that the King of kings can implant in the heart of man.

Greatly as many of the anecdotes recorded of him have delighted me, as I heard them *ça et là*, up and down, from all classes, my treacherous memory has suffered them to escape, or, at least, so nearly as to render it a matter of conscience not to record what I can but imperfectly recall. Had I been forewarned,

when I first heard the cherished name of Francis connected with some little trait indicative of his beautiful character, how often this would meet me, I should certainly have written them down from the time of my first arrival among his faithful Viennois, and so have obtained for myself something of the kind of volume I have been wishing for, but it is too late to do this now; and the old moral so often learnt, and so seldom remembered—that time lost can never be recalled—is all I have instead of it. A few little memoranda however, which, coming from one who saw him nearly, had a double value, I did note down immediately.

Among a multitude of flattering kindnesses which I have received from the Princess Metternich, a permission for Mr. H— to paint her portrait for me has not been the least valued, and, like everything else from her, the kindness was increased by the manner of it; for she made it a condition that I should be with her during the sittings. In consequence of this arrangement, I sat with her during an hour or two at a time for several mornings; and most heartily did I wish God forgive me! on almost every one of these days, that she had been a little less good, kind, and considerate to everybody than it is her nature to be, as numbers had access to her for something or other, whom I would gladly have dismissed to the moon; for anything more delightful, more fresh, animated, and *spirituelle*, or in a more admirable tone of thought and feeling, than her con-

versation, when there was leisure for talk to grow into something deserving that name, I have never listened to.

I have rarely known any one able and willing to show forth the principles and feelings imbedded in their heart of hearts with such undeviating and uncompromising sincerity as the Princess Metternich. Were this too rare peculiarity not joined with a kindness of heart that none can doubt, it would be impossible, in a position so exalted as hers, to escape making enemies. To be her enemy, however, would, I should think, be difficult for any one unless envy had something to do with it but that many may be offended by the frank expression of feelings, more awake to the consciousness of their own strength and purity, than to the expediency of making them shrink before those of others, is very likely.

A superficial knowledge of this young, beautiful, frank, warm-hearted woman, might lead to the conclusion that she was ill suited to the position in which she is placed ; but it is not so : on the contrary, her feelings and opinions make her, in spirit and in truth, exactly what every woman would wish to *appear* as wife to the minister of Austria. Her affection, her reverence, her admiration for her husband are unbounded ; and though her principles and opinions are most genuinely her own, their accordance with all that he has passed his life in supporting, gives a tone to their union, such as we

oftener read of in romances, than meet in real life. That her sentiments on some subjects may have been now and then uttered with less of diplomatic discretion than of characteristic frankness, is very probable : but there is that about her which must speedily disarm any anger so created ; and it is so evident that

“ E’en her failings lean to virtue’s side,”

that there is no need for any to forget, though it may be necessary for some to forgive her vivacity, in order to give her the place she deserves, as one of the most amiable and admirable women of Europe.

But she would hardly forgive me for forgetting the Emperor Francis, while talking of any one else. I began this letter in the intention of repeating to you one or two anecdotes respecting him, which I have heard from her, and I must not let the recollection of the charming chronicler efface the impression of her records. The general character of this excellent monarch, his gentle, kind affability of manner, and the universal reverence and love borne to him by his people, were themes on which she loved to dwell. She told me that she once paid a visit to him with the prince at one of his country residences ; and that, during the fortnight they thus lived with him as domestic friends, her knowledge of his character, and her esteem for it, became more intimate and more profound than any more ceremonious intercourse could ever have made it.

One day, when talking to her of his own health,

he said, "I know my people love me, and I think I am useful to them it is therefore that I most wish to live; but when you pray for my life, dear princess, pray that the life of your husband may be longer still I could not do without him."

Was it possible not to recall the words of Racine?

"Approche, heureux appui du trône de ton maître,
Ame de mes conseils, et qui seul tant de fois
Du sceptre dans ma main as soulagé le poids."

On another occasion he said to her, "Metternich is a better man than I am. If he is injured, he forgives it instantly, and without difficulty I forgive too, but it is not always done without a struggle."

She dwelt much upon the Emperor's tender, but always judiciously shown affection for the Duc de Reichstadt. There seems to have been as much of conscientious atonement as of parental fondness in it. The Emperor Francis felt that the young man's existence—painfully beset, as it was, by a ceaseless contrariety of feelings—was the consequence of an act of policy on his own part, which, while endeavouring to save his people from the fearful pressure that was upon them, compromised in a terrible degree the welfare of his daughter, and of her offspring. He seems, indeed, never to have forgotten the dreadful struggle which terminated in the marriage of Napoleon Bonaparte with an archduchess

of Austria; and probably never got over that worst of moral sufferings to a conscientious mind, the doubting whether an act be right or wrong.

After a severe illness, by which his life was so nearly threatened as to throw the whole empire into the most acute alarm, he was permitted by his physicians to take an airing in a close carriage. The joyful tidings of an event that proved his convalescence spread through the city, and an immense multitude crowded every access to the Bourg up to the very door at which his equipage was stationed. The Emperor entered it, and drove slowly through the dense throng, watching with deep emotion the happy countenances of his people, and the hands and eyes uplifted that called down blessings on his head. At length his wish to make his wonted salutations in return, overcame the caution which had been enjoined; and he let down the glass, putting forward his head to greet them.

The feeling, or, at any rate, the movement which this produced, was as little as possible like what a stranger might have expected. Instead of welcoming the condescending kindness with vivats and hurrahs, there rose throughout the crowd a shrill deprecating cry of "No, no, no! Oh! he will catch cold, he will catch cold!" and those nearest the window, without waiting for the imperial consent, seized on the frame of the window, drew it up, nor relaxed their hold till it was secured from within. Those who have made personal acquaint-

ance with the people of this country, will feel that the *tone* of this anecdote is eminently Austrian.

All the world knows that Wednesday morning in every week was set apart by the late Emperor for the free reception of all orders of the people who wished to see and speak to him face to face. No interest, no ticket, no introduction of any sort was required to obtain admittance to the room in which he sat, and to which the motley throng mounted by the great stairs, without the impediment of any ceremony whatever, excepting that each as he passed up received a card with a number on it, in order that, if they wished to address the Emperor on any subject important to themselves, they might claim to be heard in order.

After such as had petitions, or requests of any kind to offer, had been listened to, the Emperor used to walk in among those who had not addressed him, saying, "Well, my children . . . what is there I can do for you?" and never did one of these patriarchal audiences end without his being told by numbers of those who formed it, "We are not come to ask for anything . . . only to have the pleasure of looking at you."

Nothing can better show the strong affection with which he had inspired his people, than the manner in which he was received on returning from the disastrous campaign of 1809. The news of the defeat of his army had preceded him, and it was too important a misfortune not to have produced a general gloom among all classes.

The Emperor entered Vienna in a plain calèche with a single pair of horses, and accompanied by one gentleman, who shared the carriage with him. The simplicity of his equipage secured his incognito for a time, till a poor woman selling apples at the corner of a street caught, as he turned it, a full view of his features, and clapping her hands she cried aloud, "Mein Gott! es ist der Kaiser! es ist der Kaiser!" The word flew; and, once made the object of attention, his person was too well known for any doubt to remain as to his identity. In a moment the horses were taken off, the air rang with cries of "Der Kaiser! der Kaiser!" and before he reached the palace the crowd had increased to thousands. He alighted, and mounted the stairs, but it was perfectly impossible to prevent as many from following him as could find space to enter; while enthusiastic vivats and cheerings, mingled with words of fond attachment, accompanied him. When he reached the rooms above, and turned to look upon and welcome them, every voice was raised to call down blessings on his head. He was greatly touched, and, turning to the officer who was with him, said, "This is affection! not to one of those perhaps have I ever shown any personal kindness this is true affection It may be that I have never done good to any of them!"

His triumphant entry after the battle of Leipsic, four years later, was less glorious than this.

Without at all affecting the character of a wit, which would indeed have been greatly out of keep-

ing with the gentle and ingenuous tone of his mind, the Emperor, when finding himself obliged to refuse some request, ridiculous perhaps in itself, yet coming to him in a manner that would have made harshness repugnant to him, used frequently to put aside the petition by *un mot plaisant*, rather than by a frown.

On one occasion an officer (*à la retraite*) made a formal application to him on the subject of the uniform worn by the corps; pointing out to him its extreme and unbecoming plainness, and observing, that if his majesty would be pleased to change it to red, it would produce an effect infinitely more presentable at court.

“Red?” replied the Emperor, who would have required a very strong motive to induce him to put all his worthy veterans to the expense of a new uniform, — “Red? would it not a little too much resemble the livery of our chairmen?”*

“But your majesty,” persisted the ambitious beau, — “your majesty must remark the bad style of this dress in every way. What an object it makes one look !”

“Mon cher,” returned the monarch; “*est-ce ma faute si vous n’êtes pas mieux tourné ? Croyez moi cela ne fera rien.*”

The taste for decorations is sometimes carried here to an extent that borders a little on the ridicu-

* The porteurs de chaise, at Vienna, all wear a red livery.

lous, and the Emperor occasionally refused his consent for the wearing some trumpery little foreign order, of which the ribbon was the brightest part. A young officer, whose *rateau* of the pretty badges did not extend itself quite so widely as he wished, obtained a foreign decoration, not in the highest estimation, and applied to the Emperor for leave to wear it.

“ L’ordre de ? ” repeated the sovereign interrogatively.

“ Oui, votre majesté me serait-il permis, sire, de la porter ? ”

The Emperor paused for a moment, and then replied with a smile, “ Oui, mon ami assurément si vous n’en avez pas honte.”

Nothing was ever thought well and fitly done by the good people of Vienna, if the Emperor Francis had not some hand in it. Unless he were present at laying the first stone of every public work, great or small, no good augury would have been formed of its ultimate prosperity.

It was decided by the authorities of the city, that a channel should be constructed for carrying off the impurities which had been suffered to accumulate in the bed of the river Wien ; whereupon those employed upon its formation proclaimed aloud that the Emperor would be present in person to witness the commencement of the work. The word was passed from mouth to mouth till it assumed the form of general report, and reached the ear of Prince Metternich, with such confidence of asser-

tion, that he waited upon his master to know if such a promise had really been given.

The Emperor listened to the report with much amusement, and replied laughing, “Non, non, mon cher ami je ne suis pas si usurpateur qu’on pense Je ne veux pas prendre un droit qui appartient effectivement au roi Fifi.”*

The Emperor Francis appears to have had fewer prejudices than most men ; there was a genuine love of truth in his heart, which kept his mind free from it : but one dislike he nourished with a perseverance greater, perhaps, than he gave to its examination ; yet even this probably arose from the same love of truth which in other cases guarded him from forming unfounded judgments ; — he had an unconquerable aversion to romances, and works of pure fiction of every kind. In conversing one day with the Nonce Ortensie, he said, speaking on this subject, “Je ne lis jamais ces livres là ; je les deteste. J’ai lu un seul roman dans le cours de ma vie,— c’est *Télémaque*. Mais j’avoue que cette *Calypso* m’a toujours déplu.”

During one of these pleasant sittings, the princess gave me the history of the Emperor Nicholas’s incognito flight to Vienna from Toplitz, while the allied sovereigns were stationed at the latter place. This meeting, which caused so many speculations among us, appears to have had a much less mysterious origin

* The name given in Paris to persons employed in clearing the common sewers.

than was imagined at the time. For several years before the Emperor Francis died, it was his purpose to erect a monument, as Prussia had done, to the memory of the brave, both Austrians and Russians, who had fallen in the Napoleon wars; after his death, the immediate execution of this plan was decided on, with the ardour of purpose which ever attends the execution of a wish bequeathed by one so valued. The acquiescence of the sovereigns of Russia and Prussia to the Emperor Ferdinand's wish that they should be present at the commencement of the work, was the more readily accorded, as it gave them an opportunity of renewing personally with him the alliance they had maintained with his father, and with these views the meeting on the spot intended for the monument took place.

Prince Metternich was seated in his apartment at Toplitz, at his travelling writing-desk, in the act of sealing a letter to the princess, when he was startled by the sudden entrance of the Emperor Nicholas.

"Is that letter for Vienna, prince?" said the autocrat.—"Yes, sire, it is to my wife."

"Then give it to me, I will myself be the bearer of it."

The astonishment of the Austrian minister may be imagined at discovering that it was really the intention of the Emperor of Russia to proceed immediately to Vienna, incognito, unattended and unannounced, to stay there twenty-four hours and return to Toplitz

without deranging the plans of any, either of those he left, or of those he visited. His object was to wait upon the widow of his lamented friend, and to look upon his tomb.

The imperial escapade took place so immediately after its being announced to Prince Metternich, as to leave him no possibility of despatching a messenger in advance; and his letter to the princess was conveyed to Vienna with as little delay as if it had been carried by an ordinary courier.

The lady was seated in her boudoir when her groom of the chambers entered, almost in dismay, and announced the strange news that the Emperor of all the Russias was arrived, totally without suite, and that his equipage was in the court.

Before she could have had time to say, like Lady Macbeth, "Thou art mad to say so," the imperial letter-carrier was before her.

The astonishment created by this most unexpected visit may be easily imagined. All the princes of the Austrian family, and, in fact, all the distinguished heads of houses in Vienna being at Toplitz, the Emperor Nicholas made his quarters, for the few hours he remained there, at an hotel left vacant by its noble owner.

Having delivered the letter of which he was the bearer, he communicated to the princess his purpose of immediately proceeding to Schönbrunn, to present himself to the Empress-Mother. The princess instantly despatched an express to Schönbrunn ;

but scarcely had he delivered his news, when the Emperor of Russia appeared before the illustrious widow, who was at table. The gratification and the sorrow of such an interview may be easily imagined.

On returning to town, the Emperor Nicholas quitted the carriage which had conveyed him to Schönbrunn; and, the better to ensure his incognito, got into a fiacre, which he ordered to drive to the convent of the Capucins. He was seen to enter the well-known vault, attended by the monk whose office it is to admit strangers to view the imperial tombs, and his errand was instantly divined.

The Viennois are a quiet and orderly people, and, though the arrival of this illustrious stranger in their city had by this time begun to be whispered, no boisterous indications of curiosity had yet reached him. But all ordinary tranquillity gave way before the feelings which the homage thus offered to the memory of their idol excited. The fact that the Emperor of Russia was within the vaults of the Capucins offering a last tribute to the ashes of Francis of Austria, spread like lightning through the city; and when the imperial mourner returned again to the light of day, the surface of the earth he had left perfectly tranquil half-an-hour before, was now covered by thousands of congregated citizens, ready to stifle with their sympathy and gratitude the stranger who had made his way so directly to their hearts. He took refuge in the fiacre that

waited for him, but all incognito was at an end ; and he was drawn by as many hands as could find place upon the vehicle, amidst the most enthusiastic shouts, in which the name of their lost Emperor was heard to mingle with cries of "Long live Nicholas !"

From the midst of this noisy cortége he again entered the hotel of the Chancellerie, took his leave of the princess, and early on the following morning set off on his return to Toplitz.

The recent visit of the French princes has also left some anecdotes in Vienna : all the world seem to agree in the opinion that they are extremely fine young men, and gifted with many princely graces and accomplishments. Some one I forget who said of them here, "Ils sont de jeunes gens comme il y en a peu, et de jeunes princes comme il n'y en a point." Nevertheless the common people here, in more than one instance, demonstrated the pertinacity of their attachment to their *own order of things*. At a morning fête given in the Gloriette at Schönbrunn during their stay, "the people," as is usual in Austria, were admitted to a share of the gaiety it produced, and the gardens were thronged. The great object of attraction was of course the Gloriette ; as the court, its illustrious visitors, and all the bright train that usually accompany it, were there.

"I don't think it's worth such pushing and thrusting for it," said a weary citizen to his neighbour in

the press: "we can see our Emperor, and the archdukes, and all of 'em, any day."

"But the sons of the King of France are there," replied the other.

"Yes, I know that," rejoined the first; "but he isn't a king of God's own making, and I would not give a kreutzer to see him."

It was probably the same feeling which prevented the populace from testifying any sign of approbation, or sympathy of any kind, when these young princes made a visit (by no means incognito) to the tomb of the Emperor Francis. The sensation produced on the people by a similar compliment from the Emperor Nicholas had been much talked of, and probably led to this; but the result was very different. There is a sturdy uncompromising sincerity in the Austrian character, that displays itself on all occasions.

At the Schönbrunn fête above-mentioned, another circumstance occurred which showed the temper of the people, and it is said rather startled the royal guests; but it afforded an excellent opportunity of seeing the sort of terms on which this happy, gay-hearted population live with their sovereign and his family. The Gloriette has a number of large windows which open upon the stone terrace that surrounds it: in the midst of the entertainment a cry of terror and suffering was heard from the dense crowd which covered the whole of the steep ascent leading up to it, and even pressed against the

windows, or rather glass-doors, of the building. On hearing this cry, these doors were immediately thrown open by some of the archdukes, who pushed their way into the crowd, demanding what misfortune it was that had caused it. They were told that a poor woman had lost her child in the press, and was in great agony lest it should be trampled under foot, or unable to find her again. On hearing this, many of the most illustrious men in Austria, headed by the archdukes, exerted themselves strenuously to recover the poor woman's lost treasure; and the call for her child, so seconded, soon became successful: the lost child was found, but, instead of being the tender infant that the imperial seekers thought they might be saving from destruction, it proved a sturdy little urchin of eight or nine years old, whose curiosity being stronger than his discretion, had led him to forsake the shelter of his mother's apron-string, and seek adventures of his own. The size of the recovered baby occasioned a laugh that was cordially shared between the patricians within the Gloriette, and the plebeians without; but the imperial kindness demonstrated in the eager search, was felt by all hearts; shouts and blessings mingled with the mirth, while many of the crowd followed the archdukes as they re-entered the building, and for some moments there was a perfect *mêlée*, but a very merry one, between the guests of the Emperor and his unceremonious subjects.

Those "to the manner born" laughed heartily, and soon sent the gay intruders out again; but it was thought that those who were less familiar with the Austrian character did not feel quite sure that they were beyond the reach of an "*émeute*."

LETTER LX.

Evening Parties.—Separation between the Married and the Unmarried Ladies.—Monotony the only defect of the Society.—Exception.

March 17th, 1837.

THOUGH the balls are all over, the party-going is not; nay, even at some houses the whole *volée* assemble together in as unbroken a phalanx as if their fiddles still called them. The *besoin* for amusement in this country pervades every class alike, and something must be done at every season to gratify it. The custom of compressing into a few weeks all the dancing of the year is a little inconvenient; for, though it renders the period when it is permitted supremely gay, the uniformity of the evening parties, when it is not, must inevitably appear fatiguing by the contrast.

In London great amusement is found in ranging from one immense crowd to another, though it is sometimes done at the risk of standing and breathing with difficulty; and the fact that amusement is so found, must and does often create wonder among

the very set who so seek it: yet, greatly as one large well-filled room resembles another, there may always be found in our huge metropolis some elements of variety sufficient to prevent any very violent attacks of ennui. How provocative of entertainment is it, for instance, to a genuine right honourable when he sees a parvenue millionaire play such fantastic tricks beneath a diamond coronal as might make angels laugh and what can more effectually pass time away than the noting how a young *éligible* gradually advances in his *dévouement* towards the handsomest girl of the season? unless indeed it be watching how an *inéligible* dares to woo, and to win, maybe, the smile of a booked heiress. In London, too, every season has its own lions; and whether it be by condescendingly approaching and giving them a pat on the mane, or by listening to their roar when set going by an able stirrer-up, or by merely spying at the honoured beasts through an eye-glass from a distance, still it makes something to do, while ices are eaten, and a studied toilet displayed.

In Paris it is considerably more easy still to be amused; they have a patent property for it within them that can never be exhausted. If one thing does not answer they immediately try another; and nothing can altogether fail, for even the failure itself provokes amusement. No one is too elegant to be gay, no one too proud to be elegant; and, though they may blunder in reforming the state or the

stage, they never blunder when their object is to be amused.

The brilliant crowd which fill the saloons here do, I doubt not, amuse themselves also ; but, in saying this, I give them credit for a degree of vivacity far exceeding what I attribute to the French. With them the cause and sources of their amusement for the time being, it is never difficult to trace ; but here I think it sometimes is.

If any one, admitted within the charmed and charming circle of the “ *haute volée*,” will screw his courage to the task of entering a saloon early, he will be sure to see a number of as pretty elegant women as ever made the glory of any land, come in after him, one or two at a time, and as many gentlemen, whose noble bearing and splendid decorations make them the most ornamental cavaliers in Europe, till the rich bevy is complete : and then just at the very moment that the meeting together is accomplished, off they all go again.

If the observer be of an active temperament, and can reach his carriage in time to drive in advance to some other noble mansion whose doors are that night open,—for the order in which they are taken is known to all,—he will infallibly see the same assembling, and the same sudden dispersion and so the thing will go on till the amusements of the night be completed.

This fitful flight, and fitful settling again, often reminds me of the manœuvring of a covey of bright

paroquets, such as I have seen in the forests of New Orleans; only that the spreading of their pretty wings is an operation performed with less disturbance to the elements, than that by which the gayer-plumaged flutterers of Vienna pass from street to street, and from palace to palace.

There is one peculiarity in the parties here which I think tends greatly to injure the pretty effect of the grouping. The married and unmarried ladies are not permitted by Vienna law to remain for a moment in the same apartment, excepting when all parties are engaged in dancing. This separation I hold to be bad in a variety of ways. I think the tone of both divisions injured by it, and the general aspect of the parties suffers more than can be easily imagined; for though the component parts of a brilliant assembly may certainly be all found, if you look for them, their not being found together greatly destroys the general effect. In one room it is true you may find all the freshness of early beauty in abundance; but you must go to another for the matured and finished graces of a woman of fashion, and for that brilliant parure which even the most sentimental admirers of the "human face divine" will miss in such meetings, if it be not found. The handsome, graceful, richly-adorned woman, even of a certain age, never shows to more advantage than when grouped with young unadorned heads and slender forms, that are admired rather as promising fuller proportions for the future, than as rivals in

the perfection of womanhood. In short, I see no possible advantage in this mode of dividing the society, but much against it.

On the whole, however, it appears to me that the great defect of the best society of Vienna is its want of variety. I am quite awake to the charm of its splendour and its elegance; and, be it weakness or be it wisdom, I will not deny that an assemblage of the "*illustres rejets*" of some of the oldest and noblest races in Europe has a *doux prestige* of chivalresque dignity about it that is very attractive. I am quite aware of all this; and could, moreover, did I dare to enrich my page with the names of noble individuals, enumerate a brilliant list of high-born knights and dames, who, besides the happy accidents of birth and fortune, are rich in amiable qualities, in intellect, and in acquirement. Nevertheless, I do opine that they would very considerably embellish "*leurs belles vies*," if they would relax a little more the cordon that guards their dignity. They need not fear to do so. The nobles of Austria, Hungary, and Bohemia stand too high in the scale of European magnates to feel any just alarm lest, by looking out from their golden tabernacle upon what is going on in the world, they should compromise their unquestionable dignity.

"True it is, and pity 'tis, 'tis true," that such wild experiments have been made elsewhere on all the frame-work which ought to keep society in shape, and so much confusion and deformity in its

organization has been the result, that it cannot be matter of much wonder if those who still remain uninjured by such innovations should feel more than ever anxious to avoid them. Yet even so, and without at all relaxing this careful avoidance, many changes in the social system which have been going on in other countries, while that of Austria has remained immoveable, might perhaps be studied with advantage ; the better parts being looked at as an example, and the worse as a warning. The blending a little more of the wit, wisdom, learning, and celebrity of all Europe with the illustrious rank and hereditary dignity of Austria, could do nothing but good to the society of Vienna ; because it would be ever in the power of those whose duty as well as interest it is to keep men and things in their places, to step back into their holy of holies the moment they felt the portico of their temple profaned by a step too audacious ; and meanwhile the soothing but rather somnolent atmosphere in which they live would receive a little movement, that, like a pleasant breeze amidst a grove of orange-trees, should shake them only enough to make their flowers more vividly exhale their sweetness.

You must not, however, imagine that, because there is much of aristocratic exclusiveness here, the society is afflicted by the mildew of ceremonious stateliness. You could not adopt an opinion more foreign to the truth. The general tone, on the contrary, is that of more friendliness and ease than I

remember anywhere. All the ladies address each other by their Christian names; and you may pass evening after evening, surrounded by princesses, countesses, &c. without ever hearing any other appellations than "Therese," "Flora," "Laura," or "Pepé."

Nor will any one, not of their own exclusive set, whom accident or good fortune has permitted to enter it, ever be reminded that he is a stranger, by the manner in which he is received there. There is more difficulty in getting into the society of Vienna than into that of Paris; but, once freely admitted, the hospitality is more frank and cordial, and the facility of increasing your acquaintance greater.

It is not a month or two, however, — not even though the carnival be included, — that can bring the most favoured stranger acquainted with all that is best worth knowing in Vienna. We have been throughout the winter basking in the brilliance of some hundred stars shining amidst a milky-way of fair satellites, and have been, I assure you, very far from insensible to the charm of the spectacle but as I have already told you, these luminaries, though bright as comets, are far more regular in their movements; the revolutions of the blessed sun itself are not more punctual than their nightly course; and so strong is the effect of wandering habits in such a roaming pilgrim as myself, that I do believe I should sometimes have been well pleased

had these bright constellations, ever revolving, yet ever the same, been occasionally varied by the apparition in the midst of them of something less fair to see, provided it had never been seen before.

This essentially English longing for variety has been, however, repeatedly gratified since Lent began. We have one friend here who, though placed by birth and position in the very centre of the set that constitutes the beau monde of Vienna, seems to have arranged for herself an existence in some sort distinct, though not apart from it. The Countess —, was one of the first ladies to whom I was presented upon my entrance into the society here. Nothing could be more gracious than her reception of me; but her name, as Hamlet says, was “caviare to the multitude.” I was assured (by those outside her set), that she was haughty to excess to all the world, and, even within her own circle, more feared than loved.

This was not the sort of prologue to a new acquaintance, particularly when it is expected to last only for a few months, which is likely to make it appear particularly valuable; and, as I most undoubtedly believed what I was told, I hardly know how it has happened that we have been able to break through the wall of ice thus erected between us: but so it is; and by little and little we have contrived to find out that both in heart and mind, as well as in birth, she is one of the noblest women in the world.

This discovery has been more profitable to us since the carnival ended than before ; for, except in her own house and once or twice in the salon of her daughter the Princess —, we met her nowhere during this season of waltzes ; and now that I know her well, and begin to understand where she was, and how she was occupied, while I sat watching the spinning of countless diamonds till my eyes ached, I cannot help feeling something like regret that I did not make the same discovery earlier.

But it is not to herself alone, it is also to the set of old friends among whom she lives that I allude, in speaking of the least easily known portion of the society of Vienna. There are some features belonging to this delightful little circle, which I conceive it would be impossible to meet elsewhere. Were it that this noble knot consisted merely of persons highly intellectual and well-informed, the impression, though agreeable, would not have been new. Without meriting the imputation of national vanity, I believe an English woman may venture to say, that it is no uncommon occurrence to find herself among highly intellectual and well-informed people ; but England has no such class of persons to show as those of whom I am now speaking.

Wholly apart, as to our actual personal existence, from the scenes of war which made the history of Europe during many years, neither its terrors nor its triumphs reached us in the same manner

as they reached those who struggled almost on their own hearths, face to face, with the general foe. By the columns of the gazette, or the letters of far distant friends, only were we made to understand what was doing on the great arena that witnessed the struggle and the strife. That our hearts and souls were deeply interested in the event of every battle, does not impeach my statement. We never felt the clash, the shock, close to our own doors. We never listened to the cannon's roar as it rang the knell of those whom, perhaps, we had just loosened from a fond embrace; we never watched in breathless anxiety moment after moment for the return of fathers, husbands, sons, from the neighbouring slaughter-field Neither have we ever been elevated by the close sight of victory, or elated by the blessed deliverance from threatened danger, wrought for us by brave kindred, whose glory was dearer than even safety itself.

Minds and characters modified by such feelings as these may unquestionably be found elsewhere, though not in sea-girded Britain: wherever the scourge of war has been felt at home, the same train of feelings must have been generated; but the poetical results of the visitation, if I may so express myself, can only be found among those whose station in society placed them among the chiefs and the movers in these stirring scenes. The friend of whom I have been speaking, herself the daughter of a distin-

guished field-marshal, and bred from her earliest years in familiar friendship with the great Schwarzenburg and his most celebrated contemporaries, has a sort of high-toned enthusiasm in her character, as natural as it is delightful; and unless I could achieve the impossible task of repeating her very words, it must be impossible to give you an idea of how great the pleasure is of listening to her.

Through the kindness of this excellent friend we have of late been much with the chosen set among whom she chiefly lives, and who having, like herself, been mixed up not only, like the rest of us, with the consequences of events but actively with the events themselves, form a circle in which great acquirement and the most finished manners are united with a sort of historic interest that gives value to every word they utter. The sole surviving child of the Prince de Ligne is one of these; her house is open every evening after the theatres are over to a select and very delightful society. This lady is an admirable specimen of the set I have been endeavouring to describe; and her conversation has all the charm I have attributed to the reminiscences of the period and the associates of her youth, joined to a peculiar sweetness of voice and manner that makes it a luxury to listen to her. I much doubt if any city but Vienna can boast of salons affording this species of interest in the same perfection. I could name several of the kind where, having been once

introduced, the entrée is every evening open. The tea-table is the centre of the circle, and the spirit of easy, unaffected conversation seems to reign there as unceasingly as the ever-burning lamp of the tea-urn. I shall long remember the hours passed in those elegant and quiet meetings with mingled pleasure and regret.

LETTER LXI.

The Holy Week. — Performance of *Les Ténèbres* in the Court Chapel. — The *Fusswaschung*. — Restoring the Elements from the Tomb to the Altar. — Procession of the whole Court in attendance on it.

March 26th, 1837.

WE have just finished the Holy Week, and I have never before passed it where so much solemnity attended its ceremonies. The churches, as in all other catholic countries, have been hung with black, and the bells for a part of the time silent, being transported, according to the popular superstition, to Rome, in order to be consecrated anew. This last circumstance is of itself sufficient to produce a great effect in a city like this, where the numerous belfries are perpetually calling at other seasons on all the world to come and pray. No plays are performed, no large parties given; and I truly believe that it would be difficult to find a city wherein a stronger religious feeling pervades the great mass of the population during this week of humiliation and prayer.

On Monday we heard Handel's Oratorio of

Ataliah performed at the Bourg theatre, with a very fine orchestra and excellent choruses; but with the exception of Standigl, the first bass at the opera, who sang with beautiful correctness, and precisely in the manly simple style that best suits the airs of this great composer, the single voices were, I must say, disgracefully bad for such a capital as this.

It is not till the evening of Wednesday that the more solemn ceremonies of the week begin. In days of stricter discipline, the duties of the Holy Thursday commenced immediately after midnight; but now, excepting among the ecclesiastical bodies, "*Les Ténèbres*" are performed between five and seven on the preceding evening.

No instance of kindness, among the multitude I have received during my stay here, has touched me so sensibly as that which induced the Countess —— to take my daughter and myself with her to the chapel of the court on this and the two following evenings. The services are performed there in a style of unequalled sublimity; and the space is so small, that our getting in without her assistance was quite out of the question. We entered with her by a small private door that led through the sacristy; and thus reached the seats, not more I think than twenty in number, which are reserved for those to whom this entrée is permitted. The nobility attending on the court have their places in tribunes above, communicating with the apartments of the palace.

Nothing can be less alike than the style in which the services of this season are performed in the churches of Paris, and in those of Vienna. In Paris I remember listening to a glorious concert on Good Friday in the church of St. Roch, wherein a full and brilliant orchestra performed the solemn office of the day in a manner that enchanted the ear, and captivated the imagination. At the little court-chapel of Vienna not a note of music was to be heard except that breathed from human lips, in the utterance of the most touching eloquence that inspiration ever employed to reach the heart of man. I have no power to describe the effect produced by the awful solemnity of the words,

“Memento mei, Domine, dum veneris in regnum tuum ;”

or by the sweet sadness of those which soon followed,

“Pater, in manus tuas commendo spiritum meum ;”

breathed, as they were, in slow low trembling accents.

The great ones of the earth stood there to listen to them hushed into breathless silence ; and that small half-lighted chapel, with its Emperor, Empress, archdukes and archduchesses, all seemingly prostrate in heart before the dim cross that hung suspended above the altar, produced an impression on us which I doubt if all the splendours of Rome will ever efface.

On Holy Thursday the *Fusswaschung* by the Em-

peror and Empress was performed in the grande salle of the palace. It is a singular and striking ceremony. We were kindly furnished with tickets which admitted us to seats in a tribune raised a few feet from the ground at the upper end of the room, and commanding an excellent view of all that passed.

A long narrow table was spread down each side of the room, raised on an estrade covered with carpet; on the inner side of each table were twelve arm-chairs, and, about an hour after the spectators who lined the walls had taken their places, twelve old men and as many old women were led in, each by two supporters, and placed in them. They were neatly and warmly clothed for the occasion, but the form of their garments looked as if they were coeval with the institution. After they had been some time seated, the usual three announcing taps were heard upon the floor, the throng of officers and high officials of the court fell back, and the Emperor and all the archdukes at present in Vienna, all in military uniforms, walked up the room. Immediately afterwards the Empress, Archduchess Sophia, and a dozen attendant ladies followed. They mounted the estrades on which the tables were placed; the Emperor and his suite on the side allotted to the men, and the Empress, archduchess, and their ladies, on the other.

The graceful Empress placed herself opposite a tidy little old woman, whose superiority of age (she

only wanted one year of a hundred) gave her the first place, the archduchess stood next, and they had both a *grande-maîtresse* behind them ; while ten noble ladies in attendance stationed themselves each one opposite an old woman, all of whom were placed in order, from the venerable ninety-nine, down to the cadette aged eighty-four.

On the other side of the room the Emperor, the archdukes, and gentlemen in waiting, did the same.

As soon as the court had thus placed themselves, and each old pensioner received a kind word or two, which in more than one instance called up a blush of pleasure and agitation on the faded furrowed cheek of age, a double file of servants in state liveries marched up the room, each bearing a tray laden with what appeared to be very dainty viands, but of which meat of course made no part.

The top of the female table was immediately before the place we occupied, and the Empress being stationed at that end of it, our attention was naturally fixed upon her, and certainly no one ever went through a ceremony with greater perfection of demeanour in every way. The first part of the humble Christian office she had lent herself to perform, consisted in placing with her own hands the various dishes provided for the venerable senior upon whom she waited ; and this was done with a quiet, gentle sweetness that made us almost forget the Empress in admiration for the woman. Her august sister-in-law, and each fair dame in order,

followed the edifying example, and the table was speedily covered. Nothing, however, was eaten by the guests but soup; it having been ascertained for some years past, that sending home untouched the portion served to each, for their private enjoyment and that of their friends, gave them more pleasure than eating a nervous meal in the imperial presence, and having the remnants sent after them. Three entrées, and a dessert, comprehending I imagine as much food as would serve a family for a week's feasting, were successively placed on the table, and removed by royal and noble hands with all the zeal and activity of careful attendants.

I suppose one of the old women looked wistfully at the parting dishes, as if she were hungry; for the Archduchess Sophia bent across the table, spoke a few words to her, and then proceeded to cut off a slice of bread from a loaf that flanked her plate, and gave it to her. It was eaten with much apparent appetite, aided perhaps by the draught of what I presume was wine, which the poor soul drank with evident and hearty good will from a goblet that stood before her. This draught was, I think, taken by all, and was in every way well timed, as it served to drink to the health of their imperial hosts, to recruit strength and spirits that must undoubtedly have been somewhat tried by the whole scene, and to have fortified them against the effects of the severe cold without.

The dinner having been thus placed and removed,

the tables were withdrawn with great celerity, and the most remarkable part of the ceremony began. Pages approached with gold basin, ewer, and napkins; the beautiful Empress drew off her gloves, and tied a white linen apron round her waist, while every lady on the estrade knelt down before the poor old woman opposite to her, and pulled off her shoe and stocking. When this was completed, they drew back, and a long line of white linen cloth was placed by some of the attendants over the row of naked feet to prevent their being unnecessarily exposed. Meanwhile a priest placed himself at a desk prepared for him; exactly, by the way, in front of the Nuncio, and the Turkish ambassador, who sate side by side on the same bench we occupied, — (the former having performed the prescribed ablutions for twelve poor men at an early hour of the morning, that he might be present at this imperial ceremony). The gospel, from whence the necessity of performing this act of humiliation is drawn by Roman Catholics, was read; and it was then that one might perceive how truly the Empress of Austria submitted herself to the performance of this lowly office from genuine religious feeling. She had hitherto performed the part she had taken upon her with an air of smiling kindness, but her countenance, which is one of great feeling, is rather grave than joyous, and even her smile expresses more of goodness than of gaiety; but, while she placed the dainty dishes that were to be their portion before the poor people seat-

ed at the board, her look and manner spoke, without the slightest shade of affectation, a well-pleased gracious hospitality that had no mixture of penance in it. But no sooner did the priest begin to pronounce the words of the gospel, than her soul seemed to retire into itself, her lips moved in prayer, and though neither her hands nor eyes were raised to heaven, nor gesticulations of any kind used to produce the external appearance of devotion, there was something in her whole person that might have helped a painter at need who wished to represent, not the martyrdom, but the holy self-devotion of a saint.

When the preparations were completed, she drew near the first woman in the line, and, kneeling down, dipped the corner of a napkin in water, and touched the foot, which having wiped, she bent low her fair imperial head, and kissed it.

The performance of such an office as this must affect the spectators entirely according to the manner in which it is executed. Protestant princes do not believe themselves called upon by the gospel to perform this act of humility, and Protestant subjects are content to give them credit for a due proportion of the great Christian virtue which it exemplifies, without their making any public display of it; but, however well we may all of us be satisfied by our own arrangements, I think it impossible that any real Christian, let the form of his Christianity be as simple and undemonstrative as it may, to see this

gracious creature drag herself along upon her knees in the performance of this painful ceremony, without feeling that she had humbled her heart before God.

On rising from her knees she was very pale, and I saw tears in her fine dark eyes ; but she presently resumed her usual tranquil air, laid aside her apron, drew on her gloves, and concluded the business of the morning by throwing over the neck of each poor old soul a ribbon, from which depended a little purse containing *forty pieces of silver*, adding, what really from the manner of its reception seemed more precious still, the favour of her extended hand to kiss. Even this, however, was not enough to satisfy the feeling she inspired, for, after she had passed by, I saw one of the old women stretch out a palsied hand to seize her dress, which she pressed fervently to her lips, and I almost envied the good soul her opportunity, for I should have well liked to kiss the hem of her garment myself.

We were in the front row of the tribune, which was so placed that the gentlemen who were walking about the room were able to converse with those placed in it, and I overheard a young scape-grace say as he passed,

“ N'est-ce pas jouer la comedie ? ”

“ Au moins la pièce est fort belle,” was the answer.

The kind-hearted Emperor appeared to perform his part of the ceremony in serving the table, with

great activity and good-nature; but we were too far from his estrade to see very well what was done upon it.

The twenty-four poor people were all dressed in new uniforms for the occasion: the women in gowns of grey cloth, with large round black hats; over which, though they were flexible enough, the ribbon that sustained the purse was not passed without some little difficulty. The caps, pinnars, and aprons, were all most delicately white. The dress of the men was of the same material as the gowns of the women, and their hats very nearly similar; the greatest singularity of the male attire was a sort of white muslin tippet round their necks, such as we often see in the pictures of Holbein. Their grey beards, which had been permitted to grow in honour of the ceremony, added greatly to their venerable and picturesque appearance. The ages of the men varied from ninety-nine to eighty-three, — those of the women, from ninety-nine to eighty-four; the aggregate of age among the females surpassing, by eight years, that of the males: the old ladies, too, appeared considerably the most active and robust. They are twenty-four of the oldest poor people to be found in the city, capable of being brought to the palace.

In the evening we again went to the court-chapel, and on this occasion heard the beautiful morning-service for Good Friday. On the following morning we attended the service at St. Stephen's; there

being, as I have before mentioned, no chapel attached to our embassy here, nor any English place of worship in the city. The intense cold which we experienced in the cathedral, however, soon drove us home; and we all agree that we never before felt, at the same season, weather so severe. In the evening we once more enjoyed the luxury of listening to the solemn dirges that swell and sink upon the ear from the unaccompanied voices of the court choristers. Nothing can exceed the air of mournful simplicity that pervades the sad service. No richly clad priests officiate at the altar; no graceful censer flings its perfumed incense on the air. Few and feeble are the lights that enable the long line of assistants, seated on stools along one side of the raised space before the altar, to read the Penitentiary Psalms, which it is their office to chaunt. Before the altar are fourteen tapers of black or dingy yellow wax, which are extinguished one by one as the service proceeds: the few candles above the altar are gradually extinguished also, by some person placed behind it; but so stilly, that they seem spontaneously to expire as the *Miserere* dies away.

On the Saturday evening it is the custom for the Holy Sacrament, which has been removed from its tabernacle on the altar to a tomb prepared for it in a little chapel in another part of the palace, to be brought in very splendid procession round one of the interior courts of the building to be replaced in its golden receptacle. The Emperor and Empress, at-

tended by the court in full-dress, and the clergy belonging to the bourg with a bishop at their head, form this procession,—the gates of the court being shut to prevent the ingress of any crowd that might interfere with its solemnity ; and, indeed, the size of the area, the centre of which is occupied by the noble Hungarian guard, could not admit many more than those taking part in it. The only mode, therefore, of seeing this gorgeous display is from the interior windows of the palace, and to one of these we had been promised admission ; but the unusual severity of the weather, snow lying thick upon the ground, and still falling at intervals, rendered it impossible that ladies in full-dress could be exposed to it, and therefore, instead of conveying the sacrament round the court, it was borne through the corridors of the palace from one chapel to the other.

When we learnt this arrangement, we gave up all hope of seeing it ; but the same kindness that aided us before, did not forsake us now. The Countess — took us into one of the chapel tribunes usually occupied by the court, and from thence we looked down upon as brilliant a spectacle as it is possible to imagine within the space that contained it. The chapel, which the night before we had seen dark, and as it were heavy with mourning, was now resplendent with light. Every part of it was newly covered with gay and gorgeous hangings ; the numerous choir had changed their sable garments for suits of scarlet ; the whole floor of the building, and every

seat within it, was lined throughout with the richest carpeting; and near the altar were chairs and a prie-Dieu covered with yellow satin arranged for the Emperor and Empress. The Archduchess Sophia, her illustrious consort Francis Charles, (the heir presumptive to the throne,) and the other archdukes had seats behind them.

Soon after we had reached our places, a flourish of wind-instruments was heard; it soon ceased, and voices in solemn but triumphant chaunt arose while the rich column of the procession entered at the western door of the chapel, headed by the priests bearing censers before the host. Then came the canopy under which a bishop bore the sacred symbol about to be replaced on the altar. Immediately behind this came the Emperor, Empress, and all their brilliant company, in the superb full-dress which renders all ceremonies at this court so peculiarly historic and picturesque. The entire chapel was speedily filled with all the first princes and nobles of the land; but the group of ladies consisted only of the grandes-maîtresses of the Empress and the archduchess, and six ladies in waiting: all of them, however, were luminous with diamonds reflecting the innumerable lights that blazed in every part of the chapel. The music was extremely fine, but less striking to my feelings in its triumphant magnificence than in the plaintive sweetness and solemnity of the preceding days.

That we might see as much of this imperial pomp

as possible, our kind friend, who seemed to possess an "open sesame" for all the doors in the palace, conveyed us into an apartment through which the family and all their attendants passed in returning from the chapel, and we once again saw the bright train sweep by. The Empress looked pale, and as if too greatly fatigued : but I never saw the Archduchess Sophia look so handsome ; she wore a coronet of magnificent diamonds upon her head, which became her nobly.

And thus ended the ceremonies of the Holy Week at Vienna. I wish I may not have wearied you with my long recital of them, but to me they have been throughout a source of very great interest.

LETTER LXII.

Earthquake. — Infant Schools. — Asylum for the Blind. — Asylum for the Deaf and Dumb. — Hôpital des Invalides. — Pictures. — Dinner at the Turkish Ambassador's.

April 14th, 1837.

THE weather, though still very far from genial, is so far improved that we have begun to resume our long suspended operations in the sight-seeing line. About a month ago we ventured as far as Hietzing to see the hot-houses of Baron Hügel, the eastern traveller; and, though his system during the winter is to keep all his plants, even the tenderest heaths, in a temperature but just above freezing, we found the whole of his magnificent collection in the most perfect health: from which it appears evident that, except for the purpose of forcing the blossoms, our manner of keeping them in an African degree of heat is by no means necessary.

The snow was still lying deep upon the ground at the time of our making this excursion; and has continued to do so, by the aid of several subsequent falls, till within the last day or two. On the 26th

March, (Easter Sunday,) the ground was so deeply covered by it that the Emperor and Empress drove in the Prater in a sledge. This was the day to which during the whole winter we have been told to look forward as the Longchamps of Vienna ; and, on this day, we accordingly drove to the wide-spreading, but still desolate-looking Prater, to see all the gaiety promised. But the *élégantes* of this city were too wise to expose themselves or their bonnets to the rude blast, and the rapidly melting snow rendered the paths all but impassable for the walking classes ; so that, of all the bright display we had been so long expecting, a broken line of shut-up carriages, by no means of the gayest order, and a few hundreds of persevering pedestrians, wading through snow and mud to reach the coffee-houses where from time immemorable they have been accustomed to treat their families, and meet their friends, on Easter-day, alone appeared to reward our punctual attendance.

The salons of the evening, however, were as brilliant as if Easter had arrived decked, as it ought to be, with all the fragrant loveliness of spring. From seven till ten the palace of Prince Collorodo contained all the fine folks in Vienna, and from ten to twelve the receiving-rooms of the Chancellerie (the splendid abode of Prince Metternich) were thronged with the same gay set. We were at both ; and at the latter I had the honour of being presented to the Archduke Albert, who condoled with me on my

disappointment in the Prater, assuring me that such a season as the present was as strange to Vienna as to all the rest of Europe, and good-humouredly telling me that I must not go till the spring was really come, that I might see all the happy populace of the city pouring forth to enjoy the sun and the flowers, as it was their custom to do, by thousands and tens of thousands, as soon as the first warm weather arrived. The first of May is now spoken of as the day on which we may hope to witness this species of universal gala; and I trust the winter, "long drawn out" as it has already been, will fairly and finally disappear before that time, as we have more driving about to perform than could be endured amidst continual sleet and snow.

Among other vagaries that this season and climate have shown us, was the shock of an earthquake, which startled us in a very novel manner a little while ago. I was sitting alone in my room, and felt a movement so violent, that I supposed for an instant some tremendous accident had happened in the floor above; but the next, albeit unused to such visitations, I became perfectly aware what it was that set the curtains and the Psyche glass waving in so extraordinary a manner. The stroke terminated by a tremulous lateral movement that seemed below me, and which, had it lasted a little longer, would infallibly have made me feel as if sea-sick. My daughter, who was also sitting alone, described the movement as one that seemed likely to throw her from the sofa

on which she was placed, and she seized hold of it to prevent her falling. My maid fancied herself attacked by some violent fit, and, quite sure she was about to fall, exclaimed aloud, "Oh, my head! my head!" We all agreed, as did every one with whom we have compared notes on the subject, that there were two distinct shocks.

Since Easter, the thermometer has been running up and down in a manner that has rendered the management of our stoves a matter of great difficulty; and, even now, there are many who prophesy more snow. Nevertheless we have, as I told you, recommenced our search after all that it seems most usual for strangers to see, and have been very pleasantly assisted in this by various friends.

The infant schools are among the most interesting objects thus visited; and nothing can give more satisfactory proof of the admirable manner in which free education is carried on in this country, than a patient examination of some of these excellent institutions in the Vorstadts of Vienna. The most perfect neatness, good order, and well-awakened intelligence, demonstrate that the system pursued is excellent. The facility with which these very little creatures learn whatever is set before them settles the question, I think, as to whether the first five years of life in all classes had better be passed with literary instruction or without it. It is quite clear that, by the mode of instruction pursued here, the children suffer neither ennui nor fatigue from the process;

and the result is a much greater degree of advancement in everything taught, than was at all calculated upon when the experiment was first made. We visited several of these institutions in company with the Princess O****, whose active benevolence has made her so well known in every place where charity is the object, and so familiar with all that concerns them, that I was enabled through her means to learn many interesting details which must otherwise have escaped me. At one of these schools, the parish priest, who attended to give her all the information she wished, said, that in the schools to which these little creatures were subsequently sent, they were constantly found so much in advance of others of equal age who had not been at an infant school, that it was impossible to put them in the same class. Nothing could be freer from every appearance of restraint or fear than the air and manners of these children ; and, when their acquirements were to be shown off, the eagerness of many among them to be the one chosen, went as near as good discipline would permit to even clamorous solicitation for the honour. Their caresses and hand-kissings to the worthy curés might, to most persons, have been a considerable trial of patience ; but the good men seemed used to it, and to like it well. The dress of the children, though they were for the most part of the lowest class, was uniformly decent and respectable ; and in one case so very perfect in its neatness that, I presume, the nice little body who

presided over the feminine department, made it a condition of admittance à la rigueur. The effect of this is so important an improvement upon the immediate condition of the children, that it certainly ought to be made a general standing law at every institution of the kind, and not dependent on the personal propensities of the individual placed at the head of each. One of the attendants of the princess came loaded with little prizes of different kinds, which she distributed among the children pointed out as particularly deserving; and many were the bright eyes whose sparkle was rendered more brilliant still by the joy of receiving them.

It was also with the Princess O**** and her admirable mother that I visited the asylums for the blind, and for the deaf and dumb, and likewise the *Hôpital des Invalides*. All these institutions are excellently well located, and appear to be bien montées in every way. But the satisfaction to be derived from visiting an asylum for the blind arises wholly from the comfort of reflecting that they are provided for, and that the sad uniformity of their existence is as much cheered by occupation as their dreadful calamity will permit; but there is something in the appearance of an assemblage of blind young people that is inexpressibly painful to the feelings, and I know nothing excepting the sight of insanity that plunges me into a state of such profound melancholy. Much of the admirable system of Paris is adopted here, and with the best success.

The embossed letters by which they are taught to read, were used with a degree of expertness very surprising ; yet I could not but feel that for obtaining any such consolation and enjoyment as eyes can draw from books they were utterly abortive. The power of writing, however, which is derived from this mode of teaching the form of the letters, furnishes a much nearer approach to the use made of it by others ; many of the pupils wrote with a degree of neatness and despatch that was perfectly astonishing. But the fearful deformity in the eyes of many, and the painful want of speculation in the looks of all, rendered the spectacle one of the saddest in the world.

Far different was the impression made by the asylum for the deaf and dumb. It is many years since I last visited an institution of the kind, and it is probable that great improvements in the mode of treatment and instruction of these unfortunates may have been introduced everywhere since that time ; but to me the appearance of these quiet, but happy, busy, intelligent-looking children was both new and delightful. The education they receive here renders them so perfectly capable of maintaining themselves, that excepting one or two females, who are probably servants of the house, we saw none above fourteen or fifteen years of age. I believe it is thought that the loss of hearing is more oppressive to the spirits of the sufferer than the loss of sight ; this may, pos-

sibly, be the case when the misfortune comes too late in life for the afflicted person to acquire that wonderful quickness of perception which enables the pupils of this institution to read on the lips of those who speak to them the words uttered, merely by watching the movement of the lips. As far as I could see, there existed no difficulty whatever in the communication of the pupils with the master, or with each other; yet it was only occasionally that they had recourse to speaking with the fingers. They use, however, a good deal of action in speaking, which, though peculiarly pretty, easy, and graceful, does, I believe, indicate in part what they wish to communicate. The beautiful correctness and rapidity of their writing, and the readiness with which they calculate numbers, is very remarkable; and there is so much concentrated intelligence displayed in the manner in which they execute all the tasks assigned them, that, instead of its being a melancholy employment to watch their occupations, I found it very particularly the reverse. To fine ladies, who require active, intelligent, and discreet pages, these children would be invaluable attendants Yet I will not answer for it that they would not be quite as able to discover and communicate a secret, as those gifted with the more ordinary organs of ears and tongue. The manner in which these children make use of their bright young eyes, the awakened intelligence, the eager interest, and

the ardent desire to express what they feel, which throws their very soul into a glance, renders their countenances delightful to contemplate.

The Hôpital des Invalides is a large commodious building, capable of lodging with comfort and convenience above six hundred men; but it cannot compare in splendour either with Greenwich, Chelsea, or the Invalides at Paris. The foundation, however, appears to be a very liberal one, and gives stipends to eighteen hundred veterans beyond the number lodged in the establishment. There are two interesting pictures here, painted by Krafft, of the battles of Aspern and Leipsic.

We have not been seven months at Vienna without having visited the magnificent collection of pictures at the Belvedere; on the contrary, I have been there twice already: but this is not enough, and we are now looking forward to days of better light, some one of which we shall devote to going once more through the thirty rooms (or thereabout) which are thus occupied; and, when we have done this, I will tell you something more about them. We have also been at the fine Liechtenstein gallery, but this too we mean to visit again. These collections are too large to be seen thoroughly, unless several days are devoted to the purpose.

We had yesterday the honour of dining with the Turkish ambassador; and, as his excellency dined at half-past four, we had the opportunity of seeing some of the fine Esterhazy pictures before the light faded.

The pretty reception-room used on these occasions is, in fact, a small picture-gallery, lighted, selon les règles, from the top ; and there are some very charming pictures in it, as well as in the room in which we dined. But the chief part of the collection is in the larger edifice, which is not occupied by the ambassador as a dwelling-house, and has only been opened this winter on occasion of the magnificent ball of which I made due mention at the time it occurred. We still intend, however, to devote a morning before we go, if the sun will but continue to shine upon us, for the purpose of seeing the whole collection.

Having mentioned our dinner with the amiable mussulman, I must not omit to tell you that it was in the very highest style of elegance, and displayed, I think, altogether more finished *recherche* than any table we have seen. The wines were served in a manner more English than Austrian ; and showed that, however strictly the prophet may forbid them to his followers, the prohibition does not extend so far as to check their hospitality. The dishes were all in the best style of French cookery ; and but for the caps (turbans, alas ! no longer,) of our host and his attachés, and the graceful crescent, with the star within it, which decorated the splendid service of plate, we should never have guessed that we were on Asiatic ground. The Pacha has made great and very rapid progress in the acquirement of French, and now converses very agreeably, and with con-

siderable facility. Nevertheless, his interpreter is still occasionally in requisition, for the purpose of explaining phrases not yet familiar to him. At this dinner his Greek interpreter was not present; but we had the pleasure of meeting there Baron Hammer-Pungstal, who holds the office of interpreter to the court of Austria, and whose familiarity with all eastern tongues left no want of any other. On one or two occasions his assistance was very useful. The first of these occurred soon after we entered the drawing-room, and afforded us an opportunity of witnessing an instance of that species of readiness and poetical orientalism for which mussulmen are so remarkable. One of the party invited was a very lovely young married woman, to whom his excellence had presented a little talismanic cornelian a few days before. As she stepped out of her carriage, the bracelet in which she had had this talisman set, expressly to wear it at this dinner party, fell from her arm, and was broken. The accident was vexatious; and she entered with the fractured trinket in her hand, full of lamentations at the misfortune.

“Tell her,” said the Pacha, addressing himself to Baron Hammer, “that my gift has exactly fulfilled its purpose. It was ordained by fate that a mischance should fall upon her to-day; without the talisman she would herself have borne the injury,—it has saved her by receiving the mischief itself.”

At dinner, his excellence, in speaking to a lady whose husband was not of the party, said, that he understood he was occupied in the country by superintending the building of his "*seraglio*." Baron Hammer translated the remark, but used the word *Seraglio*, instead of rendering it into French and calling it *palais*, or *château*. "How!" exclaimed the lady, laughing and colouring a little, "does his excellence suppose that our husbands build Seraglios?" "Why not?" said the Pacha, with a look of great simplicity. But when it was explained to him, that the word Seraglio was supposed by the ignorant to signify a dwelling constructed expressly for the accommodation of a hundred and fifty wives or so, he was exceedingly amused, though declaring himself infinitely shocked by the mistake, and was extremely earnest in making us all understand that we mistook Seraglio for Harem; the former being the name of every dwelling, and the latter only signifying that species of museum to which European wives would be likely to object. This *bévue*, with the explanation and apologies that followed it, caused much amusement.

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We are looking forward to the enjoyment of an Italian opera, which we shall enjoy the more from having endured so long a fast. The voices of Austria are not among the best gifts they have received from heaven; the poor Italians, however, who

are but recently arrived here, have been many of them suffering so severely from sore throats and inflamed chests, that I doubt if they will come out in great perfection. The performances have been delayed for some time on account of these maladies ; but the first opera to be given, was rehearsed yesterday.

LETTER LXIII.

Churches. — Academy. — Conversation of Prince Metternich. —
Anecdotes related by him.

April 20th, 1837.

THE longer we remain here, the more do we become aware of the extent of that accumulation of interesting objects contained within the narrow boundary of this imperial city ; and I feel a vexatious persuasion that, much as we have done, and are doing, to become acquainted with all this, we shall leave a great portion of it unexplored. There are a multitude of churches that we have not yet entered ; so many, indeed, that it is next to impossible that we should now find time to give a look at them all. The exquisite cathedral of St. Stephen's seized upon our admiration so strongly when we first arrived, that for many weeks we never entered any other church. Of late, however, I have made it a point of duty to vary my ecclesiastical visitations ; and have accordingly heard services performed in the churches of St. Michael, St. Pierre, St. Rupert, the Maria Stiegen, St. Augustin, St. Charles, the church of the Capucins,

and that of the Jesuits. Among these, the most striking, to my fancy, is the gothic bijou called the Maria Stiegen. It is a richly wrought miniature cathedral; and, though too narrow in proportion to its breadth, is very beautiful. The church of St. Pierre, as well as that of the Jesuits, is extremely rich in ornaments of the florid Maria Theresa era. They are both fine churches; but the metropolitan church of this city is of a style so peculiar, and so majestic in its pre-eminence, that it seems to occupy all that portion of a traveller's mind assigned to the places of worship of Vienna.

Of the truly styled imperial collections of pictures, gems and antiques, I have already visited several; but, as I fully intend to revisit them before my departure, I will say nothing about them till I have seen all I can see of their treasures.

The academy of St. Anne's, "*L'Académie Impériale Royale des Beaux Arts*," appears, by all I can learn, to be admirably well arranged for the attainment of the object it has in view, which is less that it should be shown as an exhibition to strangers, than rendered essentially useful to the country.

The academy is instituted both for the purpose of affording instruction to students, and to distribute encouragement to those who distinguish themselves by industry and talent in all branches that come under the description of Fine Arts; and it is certain that the works of modern artists, which are found scattered through the houses and palaces of Vienna,

show that neither the instruction nor the encouragement has been in vain.

All instruction received at this academy is gratuitous; and amateurs are permitted freely to enter at all times, with the one essential proviso, that they do nothing to disturb the pupils. The number of students in all the various branches amounts to twelve hundred; and it is required that every six months they should produce a drawing, or a model, to show the progress they have made.

This establishment has a foundation that gives four pensions of about forty pounds per annum, for three years, to the pupils in painting, sculpture, architecture, and engraving, who appear most likely to distinguish themselves; with this, and eighty pounds more for their travelling expenses, they are sent to Rome to complete their artistic education. The pupil who has received the first prize, of the many which are given in each branch, is exempted from being drawn for military service. The academy has an annual exhibition, which is, I believe, just about to open; and I flatter myself we shall find time to visit it; though the day of our departure draws so near, that every intervening one remaining seems to have more business allotted to it than it will have hours for.

But, rich as Vienna is in interest of every kind, the one source of it which ranks in my estimation above all others, is to be found in the society of the great statesman who, for more than the

quarter of a century, has watched over and sustained its prosperity. The conversation of Prince Metternich is calculated to leave a deeper impression on the minds of all who have enjoyed it, than everything else they may leave behind on quitting the scene in which he moves: and that this is true will, I am quite sure, be allowed by those who alone have power to form an opinion on the subject; for the effect he produces in society is felt by all who enter it with him; he never opens his lips without exciting a degree of attention, and a vividness of expectation in every one around him, that if once witnessed would sufficiently mark the sort of estimation in which his conversational powers are held, even were the observer denied the advantage of listening and judging for himself. It is not by strangers alone that this influence is felt; if it were, the thing might be easily understood as arising from the curiosity inevitably excited by a man who has played so distinguished a part in the great drama of which we have all been interested spectators; but persons who are nightly admitted to his drawing-room, and who rarely pass a day without enjoying this pleasure, appear to relish it quite as keenly as if they each evening listened to him for the first time.

“ You should have stayed later last night HE talked a good deal after you went he often talks most towards the conclusion of the evening; you must remember this !” has been said

to me repeatedly by various persons, as far differing from each other in most things as it is well possible to conceive, yet agreeing in the belief that the kindest thing they could do for a stranger, for whom they were anxious to procure all that was choicest and best, was to give her a hint as to the times and seasons most propitious for hearing Prince Metternich talk.

The manner in which the prince mixes in the world is managed with as much skill as all things else that his judgment regulates: few people, I believe, enjoy society so much, yet lose so little time by it; the claims upon his time are indeed so multiplied, that without much good management he must either give perpetual offence by declining to appear where he was hoped for, or make such sacrifice of his hours as would be quite incompatible with the ceaseless duties of his high station. He is, moreover, passionately fond of the chase; and I suspect that there is no point at which the burden of office presses upon him more disagreeably than when it prevents him from enjoying it as often as he would wish; but his reception of foreign ministers, and all others who seek him on business, is so arranged as generally to allow of his giving a short space to exercise, either in riding or walking, every day. He dines at five, and rarely, I think, without guests; he also occasionally dines out, but in neither case does the engagement detain him longer than the period passed at table, and the

few moments permitted to coffee-drinking afterwards. He dines very lightly, but I believe generally sleeps for half-an-hour before he returns to business; after which it appears his habit to keep himself apart in his cabinet or library till ten o'clock, at which time the princess's drawing-room, on the private evenings, has generally from a dozen to twenty persons in it, chiefly gentlemen. During the season we have met him at the evening parties of all the principal foreign ministers; he seldom remains long, but his happy graceful manners enable him to do more in the way of courteous kindness in half-an-hour than most others could achieve in half a day.

At his own house he may be seen (with rare exceptions, and those only occurring when every one else, as well as himself, is at some great party,) every evening from ten till twelve; and longer too sometimes, if, in conformity to such a hint as I have mentioned, one ventures to profit by finding him in a vein to discuss any topic of peculiar interest or importance.

The princess receives publicly, Sundays, Wednesdays, and Fridays. On the Sunday evening there is generally a crowd, and most of the diplomates are very constant in their attendance on the other two; but it is on the intervening nights that the entrée is an especial favour, and it is on these quiet evenings that the listening to Prince Metternich becomes one of the most delightful occupations

that any salon in Europe can offer. On these occasions there is never any formal circle, and seldom many ladies ; but if it chance that there are more than usual, that species of talk which is generally considered as inimical to conversation is removed to a distant part of the room where there is a tea-table, round which all congregate who do not prefer profiting by what is going on near the work-table of the princess.

It is then and there that I have enjoyed what most people would, I believe, acknowledge to be the highest gratification a journey to Austria can give, — namely, the easy, eloquent, lively, anecdotic conversation of its minister. This extraordinary man combines in a very remarkable degree all the various traits that constitute a good talker. His voice is low and sweet,—ualities peculiarly felt in a Vienna drawing-room, where the echoes, it must be confessed, are not seldom awakened by tones more loud and harsh than could easily be met elsewhere. His enunciation is extremely distinct, with an emphasis so light that he never appears to *talk in italics* ; and yet no strength is ever lost by the want of it. His mild tranquil eye, which is fixed on that of the person he addresses, seems to catch the thoughts as they rise in reply, so that his discourse has often the varied tone of dialogue, even when perfectly uninterrupted ; yet he is always ready to listen, and listens well. His manner of narrating is admirable ; playful, yet concise, with all the points made to

ressort, like studs of diamond upon a casque of gold.

His countenance, though not one of those whose ever mobile expression does half the work of the discourse, is one that the eye is well repaid for resting upon ; it is full of thought, so much so indeed that words which he sometimes utters with gay and playful animation, seem like sparks thrown off carelessly, while the source of light within is at work more earnestly than he confesses. The regularity of his very handsome features is perfect ; but their expression is more the result of an habitual activity of the intellectual powers, than of any momentary exertion of them.

One never sees three or four persons gathered round him on these quiet evenings, without remarking a sort of conspiracy among them to make him talk ; and, effectually as he has kept other conspiracies at a distance, this is one which is not always defeated. I can hardly imagine a more daring and obvious defiance of the wishes of all around than would be displayed by any person who should burst across the thread of his discourse at these times ; a boarding-school miss thrusting Taglioni off the boards that she might show the world her steps, would be about as cordially received.

Much that I have heard Prince Metternich say on these occasions I might transmit to you without scruple, were it not that I feel incapable of doing

justice to what I wish to describe, by a repetition that must of necessity be garbled and imperfect.

The great men who have given themselves to the uttering of apophthegms and epigrams may be easily and faithfully quoted ; but where the value of what is said consists in the clear and accurate eloquence with which contested facts are recorded, that are better known to the speaker than to any other and, still more, when the charm lies in the racy sketches, given with the same advantage of thorough acquaintance with the subject, of many on whom the eyes of all Europe have been fixed, the attempt to repeat it, with anything like satisfactory exactness, must fail.

It is not long, however, since I was present in the salon of the *Chancellerie* when a conversation took place among a very small party there, wherein much was said, the value of which depended less upon the grace of language and manner, than upon the facts stated. As these facts have already been published, though not very correctly, there can be no indiscretion in alluding to them.

The subject under discussion was History, the manner in which it is generally composed, and the degree of reliance to be placed on it. The *ci-devant* minister of Don Carlos (Alcudya) was present, and declared most positively, that not one single word of all that has been published as having passed in conversation between himself and Christina or her

father or Don Carlos, was true. He said, that the reports circulated at the time had been very faithfully given by newspaper and other writers, but that these reports were altogether invented and suppositious.

“ Mais que voulez-vous ? ” . . . said Prince Metternich. “ How is it possible that conferences which have passed between two persons *seul à seul*, should be published faithfully ? unless, indeed, one or other of the parties be the publisher.”

He then spoke of his own famous interview with Napoleon at Dresden, in 1813, during which they were shut up together during several hours, without the possibility of being heard by any one ; “ and yet,” said he, “ who has not read an account of everything that passed on that occasion ? There was one circumstance,” he continued, “ related by Savary, that certainly did occur, and Napoleon must have related it to him, himself. In the course of that important conversation Napoleon lost his temper, and, in a violent access of passion, threw his hat across the room. There was another circumstance also,” added the prince, after a pause “ and that, too, Savary could have learned only from Napoleon he found himself obliged to pick the hat up again himself. These facts are correctly stated ; but, for the rest, there was not a single word recorded as having passed in that interview, that was not invented. It perpetually happens,” continued Prince Metternich, “ that historians,

knowing certain conferences to have taken place, and knowing also that certain events have followed, imagine that these known facts furnish sufficient data on which to fabricate with tolerable plausibility the substance of what was spoken at the conferences which preceded. The same thing occurs continually also in the publication of statements respecting councils of war; the subsequent operations being considered by historians as sufficient testimony of what was previously decided on. These know little of the real march of events, and are not aware how many preconcerted measures are frustrated in both cases by unlooked-for circumstances which intervene, and change at once the whole face of affairs. But such records pass current with all — save the very few who know better.”

When recurring again to the interview with Napoleon at Dresden, he said, “I can, however, pledge my honour and my soul,” these were his words, and uttered with much solemnity, “that all which did pass then is recorded faithfully by my own pen. I retired from the interview to my desk, and wrote a minute account of it for the Emperor Francis, wherein if, in consequence of the great length of the interview, I may have failed to insert every word that *was* uttered, I can at least pledge myself that not one is inserted which *was not*.”

I am not sure whether it was of this memorial or of some others that he said, “These things are certainly of high interest, but they cannot appear

de mon vivant." Nobody wishes this great man a longer life than I do, but these words seem to give notice that those who survive him may hope for historical documents of rare value. The history of his own times, by his own hand, would be one of the most interesting records ever given to the world.

On this same evening Prince Metternich narrated to us with great spirit some particulars of a political manœuvre, which were exceedingly amusing; I cannot give it you with all the charm of his words and manner,—but the facts I shall not blunder in.

During the hundred days of Napoleon's extraordinary but abortive restoration, he found himself compelled by circumstances, *bon gré, mal gré*, to appoint Fouché minister of police. About ten days after this arch-traitor was so placed, Prince Metternich was informed that a stranger desired to see him. He was admitted, and the prince recognised him as an individual whom he had known as an employé at Paris; but he now appeared under a borrowed name, bringing only a fragment of Fouché's handwriting as testimony that he was sent by him. His mission, he said, was of the most secret nature, and in fact only extended to informing the prince that Fouché was desirous of offering to his consideration propositions of the most important nature. The messenger declared himself wholly ignorant of their purport, being authorized only to invite the prince to a secret conference through the medium

of some trusty envoy who should be despatched to Paris for the purpose.

The prince's reply was, "You must permit me to think of this." The agent retired; and the Austrian minister repaired to the Emperor, and recounted what had passed.

"And what do you think of doing?" said the Emperor.

"I think," replied the prince, "that we should send a confidential agent, not to Paris, but to some place that may be fixed upon, who shall have no other instructions than to listen to all that the Frenchman who will meet him there shall impart, and bring us faithfully an account of it."

The Emperor signified his approbation; "and then," continued the prince, "as we were loyal and faithful allies, and would do nothing unknown to those with whom we were pledged to act in common, I hastened to inform the allied sovereigns, who were still at Vienna, of the arrival of this messenger, and the manner in which I proposed to act."

The judgment of these illustrious personages, like that of the Emperor Francis, was in favour of this mode of proceeding; and the mysterious messenger was dismissed with an answer, purporting that an Austrian, calling himself Werner, should be at a certain hotel in the town of Basle in Switzerland, on such a day, with instructions to hear, and convey to Prince Metternich, whatever the individual sent to meet him should deliver.

This meeting took place at the spot and the hour fixed. The diplomatic agents saluted each other with fitting courtesy, and seated themselves vis-à-vis, each assuming the attitude of a listener.

“ May I ask you, sir,” at length said the envoy from Paris, “ what is the object of our meeting ? ”

“ My object, sir,” replied the Austrian, “ is to listen to whatever you may be pleased to say.”

“ And mine,” rejoined the Frenchman, “ is solely to hear what you may have to communicate.”

Neither the one, nor the other, had anything further to add to this interesting exchange of information ; and, after remaining together long enough for each to be satisfied that the other had nothing to tell, they separated with perfect civility, both returning precisely as wise as they came.

Some time after the imperial restoration had given way to the royal one in France, the mystery was explained. Fouché, “ *cette révolution incarnée*,” as our narrator called him, no sooner saw his old master and benefactor restored to power, than he imagined the means of betraying him, and accordingly despatched the messenger who presented himself to Prince Metternich. Fouché was minister of police, and probably all the world would have agreed with him in thinking, that, if any man in France could safely send off a secret messenger, it was himself ; but all the world would have been mistaken, and so was Fouché. The Argus eyes of Napoleon discovered the proceeding the first

messenger was seized and examined on his return. . . the minister of police informed of the discovery, and coolly assured by his imperial master that he would probably be hanged. The second messenger was then despatched by Napoleon himself, with exactly the same instructions as the envoy who met him from Vienna ; namely, that he was to listen attentively to all that was said to him, and, when questioned himself, confess, what was the exact truth, that all he knew of the mission on which he came was, that he was expected to remember and repeat all that he should hear.

The name of Werner, given by Prince Metternich to the person sent to Basle,—chosen only because it was a very common one throughout Germany,—occasioned a good deal of comic embarrassment to an individual who really bore it. As soon as the occurrence became known, a young man attached to the Austrian embassy, I think at Berlin, immediately became an object of much attention, and was gently cross-examined by his acquaintance, and closely questioned by his friends, as to the particulars of this singular mission. It was in vain that he protested his perfect ignorance on the subject, this only added piquancy to their inquiries ; and for a long time he continued to be considered as the hero of a sort of diplomatic romance, with the additional glory of having proved himself faithful beyond example in that most difficult part of his profession, the keeping a secret.

Another evening, when not more than a dozen persons were present, and half of these at the tea-table, the conversation fell upon the beauties and defects of style in composition; and a more delicate and finished sketch of general criticism than the little circle round Prince Metternich then listened to, could not be wished for. He seems habitually to examine every subject that comes before him analytically, which gives him a facility in at once reaching the most important part of it, that is exceedingly remarkable. This habit, joined to his happy choice of words, imparts a clearness and precision to every sentence he utters that is equally agreeable and uncommon.

In speaking of the comparative difficulties in composition to be encountered in different languages, the prince stated his belief that the syntax of the English tongue could be more easily mastered than that of most others, and mentioned, as his reason for thinking so, the fact that our despatches were invariably better written than those of any other country.

LETTER LXIV.

Belvedere Gallery of Pictures. — Ambras Collection. — Liechtenstein Gallery. — Gardens. — Camillas. — Imperial Conservatory. — Schönbrunn. — The Imperial Hot-houses. — Duc de Reichstadt. — The Archduke John.

April 24th, 1837.

VIENNA is so rich in pictures, that, in order to put you perfectly au fait of all you ought to look for in that line if ever you have the happiness of finding yourself here, I ought, instead of a letter, to write a volume on the subject, and a long and a learned one too, or it would not well fulfil its purpose. The immense imperial collection fills the whole of the noble palace of the Belvedere, built by Prince Eugene of Savoy for his own residence, and containing a prodigious number of fine rooms as well calculated by their great height and lofty windows to show pictures to advantage as any rooms can be which are not lighted from above.

The collection is divided into schools; a system the most favourable, perhaps, for the general benefit of various colouring and style: for the green-toned

carnations of Carlo Dolce show to sad disadvantage beside the ruddy tints of Rubens; while the grace of Raffael, or the heaven-inspired loveliness of Correggio, make one turn almost with loathing from the veracious homeliness of Teniers and Ostade. Nevertheless, a multitude of pictures so hung have, individually, a less stimulative effect on the imagination than when all seem striving to start from canvass into life, *à l'envie l'un de l'autre*, and each one by means of a different process.

There is a basement story at the Belvedere, that at present seems a sort of refuge for the destitute; for a vast number of pictures of all sorts and kinds are placed there, which might find their station in the better-lighted chambers above, were it not that their position in the society to which they belong does not entitle them to this honour. To these rooms you descend, on arriving at the top of the superb flight of steps by which the hall of entrance is reached. The staircase leading upwards from this hall is very noble, terminating in a corridor, in the centre of which folding-doors open upon a large vaulted room, that rises to the roof of the building. The only thing besides the magnificent style of the room to stop one here, is the portrait of Maria Theresa; and after being as long in Vienna as I have, it is impossible, even with some of the finest canvass of Italy on one side, and of Flanders on the other, to avoid pausing, for a moment, to do it reverence before turning towards

either. Seven rooms, containing pictures by masters of the different Italian schools, offer a long vista to the right of the hall; and seven more, filled with some of the finest works of Flanders, are on the left. The floor above is occupied, for the most part, with pictures of the old German school, the remaining rooms being devoted to the productions of the modern artists of Austria.

The collection altogether is enormous in magnitude, and possesses many first-rate pictures. Rubens is in great strength, and so is Rembrandt; though the latter is shown in portraits only. Of Raffael's there are several, two quite exquisite. The portraits of Tintorett abound, many of them in his very best manner But I must not go on; I have no intention of giving you a catalogue raisonné of this superb gallery, which I have now visited three times, and at last come away, fully aware that I had not made myself acquainted with a tenth part of its treasures.

At the lower end of a fine old-fashioned stately garden is another edifice, making a part, I imagine, of the same premises; but for what purpose originally erected by Prince Eugene, I cannot conjecture, unless it were to escape from the too great magnificence of the palace above. The same motive must, I imagine, have led to building the pavilion in Prince Esterhazy's garden in the Maria Hilf, which stands close to the great house, and is itself a very sufficient mansion for a moderately sized family.

This manner of having two houses instead of one to complete a residence, has in it something quite new to us.

The lower Belvedere, which is used as a museum, containing a most interesting collection of miscellaneous curiosities of the middle ages, is an object that none should overlook in a visit to Vienna. It is named the "Ambras collection," as the greater part of the articles it contains were brought from the castle of Ambras in the Tyrol, where they had been brought together with great care, expense, and research by the Archduke Ferdinand, son of Ferdinand the First, in the latter end of the sixteenth century. The number of curious things collected here is immense. Three saloons are entirely filled with ancient armour, and various instruments of war, having many Turkish arms and accoutrements among them. Many of the suits of armour are labelled with the names of their former possessors. The oldest suit is that of Albert, son of Rudolph the First of Habsbourg. There are three of Sigismund (third son of Ferdinand the First), and three of Charles the Fifth; one worn when he was quite a child. He must have been a stout, strong-built man. One suit was of perfectly gigantic size, and was labelled "The great Bavarian of Trent;" the sword was above six feet long: there were certainly giants in those days. One room was hung with a number of curious old historical portraits; many of which bear strong internal evidence of being painted *from the life*. Henry

the Third, of France, shows forth a most disgusting physiognomy : his face is small, livid, black-bearded, with a most malicious and sinister expression in his villanous little eyes. In this room is the famous pedigree of the house of Habsbourg, containing portraits (*soi-disant*) of all the personages it commemorates : two sides of the room are covered with it ; but “ more remains behind,” rolled on a large cylinder. Another room is filled with innumerable nick knacks of all sorts, chiefly works of art of the middle ages ; as carvings in wood, ivory, and so forth. The whole collection is rich in genuine antiquity, and, large as it is, has not a single object in it that does not deserve attention.

Close beside the gardens of the Belvedere, is a palace belonging to Prince Schwarzenberg, the grounds of which are beautifully planted, and, with the usual generous liberality of the country, open at all times to the public.

The Liechtenstein gallery of pictures, which is in a noble summer palace in the Roszau Vorstadt, contains a larger number of pictures than can be found in any private collection on this side the Alps ; among them are many of first-rate excellence : but the collection would be greatly improved in general effect if divided in half ; the better being permitted to remain, and his highness persuaded to “ throw away the worser half of it.” Every wall in this enormous building is at present crammed with pictures, with a closeness of packing greatly injurious to each, and

giving to the whole the air rather of an auction-room, than a palace.

One fine large room is entirely filled with a series of pictures by Rubens, considered to be one of his finest works. They are as large as those in the possession of the Marquis of Westminster ; radiant in colouring, and for the most part atrociously disagreeable in composition.

Vandykes of a far more touching order of beauty make the glory of another room; in which also there are two boys, by Rubens, worth all the sprawling splendour of his great pictures. A lady playing on a lyre, by Carravaggio, is one of the most perfect pictures I ever saw ; and a female portrait, by Giorgione, keeps you chained before it, spite of a multitude of charming things that call for your eyes around it.

It was a matter of no small wonder to us, that this magnificent mansion should be left ever and wholly uninhabited. In England, where the rich and the noble find one of their greatest sources of pride and pleasure in " receiving," as it called, such a palace as this of Prince Liechtenstein would be invaluable, for it seems built and arranged on purpose for it. The entrance is by a magnificent colonnade that is roofed by arches which sustain the centre division of the palace, and through which is seen the extensive gardens behind. From this colonnade a marble staircase, of extraordinary size and splendour, leads to the great hall, one of the finest rooms I ever

entered, from every side of which open noble suites of apartments. These contain the most valuable part of the collection ; though, in the enormous labyrinth of rooms above, there are several that would be classed as belonging to the “ better half.” In all this world of noble chambers there is no furniture whatever, unless the pictures are to be called so ; and I never remember to have seen anything that showed so literally *l'embarras de richesse* as these richly-hung and finely-proportioned apartments, forsaken by their princely owner, solely, I imagine, because there are not days enough in the year to permit his living in all his palaces.

The gardens, however, are very well kept up, and, though not particularly beautiful in themselves, they are rendered one of the most agreeable objects in the immediate neighbourhood of Vienna by the peculiarly fine collection of plants in the conservatories. The *camillas* are surpassingly fine, and fill a vast extent of green-house without the mixture of any other flower.

The garden-flowers in this country are, I believe, generally of less flourishing growth than with us, owing, probably, to the extreme dryness of the atmosphere ; but in the conservatories, where the gardener can pretty well make what climate he will, the collections are remarkably rich and beautiful. The prettiest thing of the kind I remember is the imperial conservatory in the Bourg garden. The garden itself is a portion of the fosse which sur-

rounds the city, and has nothing very remarkable in it beyond the prettiness that trees and flowers always appear to have when seen in the midst of a town ; but the green-houses, which extend along the whole space thus laid out, are peculiarly beautiful. The wall of the fortifications, which is here of great height, forms the back, and gives an elevation greatly exceeding what is usual for such edifices. The range of building is divided into five compartments ; at each end is a small pavilion : these communicate with the palace, and are very elegantly furnished. In one is a marble group of some pretension, and in the other an urn to the memory of the late Emperor. A noble length of well-stocked green-houses, with the plants beautifully arranged up to the lofty ceilings, connect these pavilions with the centre apartment of the suite, and it is in this that the peculiar beauty of the arrangement consists. This magnificent room, which is above a hundred feet long, and finely proportioned in every way, is ornamented by a border of choice flowers and blossoming shrubs of the more delicate kind, on every side of it ; and in the centre is a large oval pyramid, formed of all that is most fragrant and most fair among flowers. Garden-chairs are placed at intervals round the room, the lofty windows of which are shaded at pleasure, producing just as soft, or as bright a light as may be wished for. This style of garden-room was quite new to me, and I have seldom been more struck by the beauty of a coup-d'œil.

The delicious odour that pervaded the air, no doubt, contributed in some degree to the sort of enchantment that I felt around me ; but, without any adventitious aids whatever, I am quite sure that the Bourg conservatory would be declared by all who loved flowers to be one of the loveliest spectacles in the world.

It is here that the Empress gives the elegant morning entertainment to the beau monde before the court leaves Vienna for Schönbrunn, which, if I mistake not, is called "*la fête de Flore*," and which I have heard described as one of the prettiest scenes imaginable. Good music and good waltzing in this fairy paradise, with the lovely women of Vienna dressed in such spring costumes as the unequalled elegance of their toilets would be likely to produce, must certainly form an assemblage of no ordinary attraction.

I think I told you, that, when we first visited Schönbrunn, we were not permitted to see the interior of the palace ; but the Princess Metternich encouraged us to make another attempt : so, furnished with a letter from Count Bombelles, the amiable and accomplished governor of that "expectancy and rose of the fair state," the young Archduke Francis, we have done so, and with excellent success, having now, I believe, seen the palace and all its noble appurtenances completely.

The hot-houses contain by far the most interesting collection of exotics that I have ever seen. I do not

speaking of unique specimens, such as are sometimes seen with three leaves and a half upon a sickly stem, exciting the ecstasy and envy of the profoundly botanical ; of such there may be many, without my having been greatly moved to admiration thereby : but the interest which I may venture, with all my ignorance, to dilate upon, consists of the natural and picturesque arrangement of the most magnificent African and American trees, in noble conservatories that admit of their growing to a prodigious size, and surrounded by all the minor accompaniments of the same clime, such as heaths and mosses, so as almost to captivate the fancy with the belief that Africa and South America have been reached by enchantment as the doors were passed.

The chateau itself is large and handsome, with one very fine apartment for receiving company, and many suites for comfort and summer enjoyment. Some of the rooms, beautifully fitted up with Chinese decorations, are still exactly as Maria Theresa left them ; and others receive especial interest from some old historical pictures, painted for the places where they still hang. But the principal reason, perhaps, for which no stranger would wish to leave this palace unseen, arises from its connexion with the history of Napoleon and his son. It was here the great captain, intoxicated and made giddy by his own success, placed himself, for the short but terrible period during which he set his audacious foot upon the Imperial Eagle of Austria ; and it was here that the

noble boy who owed his existence to this audacity so early breathed his last sigh. The same chamber, chosen by the conqueror for his resting-place while he dreamed of forging an eternal chain for the house of Habsbourg, was granted by tender indulgence to his son, who clung to his memory with a strange mixture of the two most widely-different imperial natures which made up his being,—half venerating him because he had carved out his own lofty place, while the other half of the full filial feeling was supplied by reverence for the ancient race with which he had so daringly found means to mingle.

Having gazed our fill upon this historic chamber, we visited all the noble appendages to the chateau. The orangery is very extensive, and well filled; but I doubt if the climate be favourable to the tree, for though many of them are of very respectable size, there is not one that shows such vigour of growth as those of Versailles.

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Yesterday I had the honour of being received by the Archduke John, who is here for three days only, having passed the larger portion of the time he had allotted for this visit to Vienna with his brother the Palatine. He brings with him the important and most welcome tidings of the perfect recovery of that prince, and thanksgivings were offered in the imperial chapel yesterday morning for the good news.

In common with every one admitted to the honour of an interview with the Archduke John,

I left him equally delighted by the kindness and affability of his manners, and by the ability displayed on every subject on which he converses.

The name of the Archduke John is often quoted with admiration by a certain class of foreigners for no very good purpose, who, while they cannot deny his high ability and great acquirements, would persuade the world that his political principles are at variance with those on which the government of his country is founded ; and, in short, that the good and wise Archduke John of Austria is an imperial convert to the cause of revolution or something very like it. Those who have wished to believe, and dared to insinuate this absurdity, have either asserted what they knew to be false, or else, being sincerely deluded by their own vain theories, have conceived that the notorious fact of his imperial highness's superior intelligence must of necessity make a democrat of him ; a style of reasoning, by the way, by no means uncommon among the clique.

It requires no very great sagacity, however, when conversing with one of the most frank and independent-spirited men in the world, to discover what his sentiments are on the subjects under discussion ; and such liberalism as the Archduke John advocates may safely be taken as the solid rock and foundation stone on which to rest the government of his own country, and that of all others, (each according to its own form,) in which national prosperity, and the

maintenance of legitimate authority, make the essential objects.

He had the good-nature to answer many questions as to the state of the country respecting the general progress of education among the people of the empire,—a subject to which he is said to have given much enlightened attention; and his statements are such as clearly to prove that without any quackery, or unnatural vehemence in the propelling power, the business of instruction is going on with a degree of steady perseverance and quiet rapidity which will probably leave many of their more noisy and boastful competitors behind.

In speaking of the varieties of national character, he spoke with affectionate partiality on that of all races of Montagnards. He named his own beloved Styria, the Tyrol, Scotland; and last, but not with least feeling, the “*faithful, noble-hearted, brave, and devoted Biscayans.*”

“My mother was Spanish,” he said, “and for her sake I feel more than I can express for the present suffering condition of her unhappy country.” In reply to an observation from me on the unfortunate manner in which the name of Britain had been involved in her struggle, he replied earnestly,

“Not Britain not England. It has been the conduct of a faction, and not of the country.”

He spoke of his desire to visit England, of his admiration of her all-powerful industry and resources, and of his conviction that the national

character of the people would eventually save her from the destruction threatened by the party who were at this moment the most conspicuous.

“Ce n’est qu’une espèce de grippe morale,” said he, smiling, “qui passera bientôt.”

LETTER LXV.

Italian Opera.—Private Concerts.—Esterhazy Collection of Pictures.—Count Czernin's Gallery.—Pic-nic.—Imperial Cabinet of Antiques.—Profession of Three Sœurs Grises.—Armenian Convent.

Vienna, 26th April.

AT last an Italian company have taken possession of the opera house, and, though they are by no means performers of the highest class, the change is a very decided improvement. Were it not for the excellent orchestra of this theatre, I should certainly be obliged to say, in leaving Vienna, that its music (with the exception of the court-chapel) has altogether disappointed me. But while their concert-playing continues so very nearly faultless, it would be ungrateful to pronounce such a sentence. The finish and perfect accord of their instrumental performances is, indeed, most admirable; and, in that particular, all we have to lament is, the fashion of the day in their choice of music. Mozart and Beethoven are heard no more; and at a concert of the conservatory, at which we were present, in the

Redouten-saal, the disagreeable conviction was forced upon me that Handel, too, was most completely *mauvais ton*. The performance, which was chiefly instrumental, and very good, concluded with a grand chorus from Saul, excellently performed; but, when it was ended, not a hand stirred, though every other piece had been greeted with a peal of applause that almost shook the roof. . . . This is sad.

Another point in which I have been disappointed is the very rare occurrence of good music in evening parties. In truth, excepting in one single instance, we never heard a single note of music performed in a *salon noble* throughout the whole season. This one exception was a very good concert at the house of the Countess B——, where we had an admirable concerto from Mayseder, who is considered, I believe, the first violin in Vienna; some excellent violoncello playing from Mark, and two or three songs from the graceful and elegant-looking Mademoiselle Löwe.

Among the Jews I am told there is a vast deal more of this species of amusement than among the Christians; and those of the latter who, spite of fashion, continue to indulge in the luxury of sweet sounds, are to be chiefly found, not among the noble, but the boursier set.

* * * * *

We have been kindly admitted by the Turkish ambassador to see the Esterhazy collection of pictures by daylight: it is a very noble one, and many

well-known chefs-d'œuvre make part of it. The famous Rembrandt of Christ before Pilate is a wonderful picture.

Count Czernin's gallery is another private collection well worth visiting. Among the many charming things it contains, a small Paul Potter must, I think, be counted first ; in its peculiar style it is perfection, and shows that the artist must have studied the "lowing herds," from which he chose his models, with much philosophical contemplation. Not Rembrandt or Vandyke ever produced more distinctive physiognomies than may be seen in the heads of this picture.

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Notwithstanding the backward season, we have had the courage to attempt a pic-nic, and the good fortune to fix upon nearly the only day that has yet shone upon us in which such a scheme could have proved successful. The object of the expedition was to visit Neuvaldegg, a *maison de plaisance* belonging to Prince Schwarzenberg, at the distance of about ten miles from Vienna. With the *maison*, however, we had nothing to do ; but we enjoyed exceedingly several hours' rambling among the delightful collection of little hills of which the domain is made up. The aspect of the place is something between a park and a chase ; and, from the singular inequality of the ground, the variety of landscape is incessant, and at several points of very glorious extent. The capricious sun of this most capricious season gave us on

this occasion quite enough of his brightness to make us prefer the shady side of the pretty pavilion in which we dined ; and the whole expedition was more completely successful than we had any right to hope for a scheme of the kind within a month after a sharp snow-storm.

I believe I have before told you, that our purpose is to see Vienna come forth to sun herself in the Prater on the first of May ; and then, giving her one last long lingering look of affection and regret, to turn away our eyes from all her enchantments, and move homewards. This first of May is now drawing terribly near, and the last few days that remain to us have more allotted to them, I fear, than they will give good space for ; so, if my account current of what I see become somewhat sudden and brief in its manner, you know the reason for it.

The cabinet of antiques is one of the finest in Europe, and in several particulars ranks first. Several objects in the unequalled collection of *pierres gravées* are quite marvels in their way. There are above twelve hundred antique cameos among them, many of which are of the very highest order of excellence. The celebrated Apotheosis of Augustus is among these, which ranks first of all known at present to exist for the beauty of its work, and third as to its size. I have seldom looked at anything from which I found it more difficult to turn away. The enormous oriental agate dish, which measures above seven feet in circumference, is another treasure to

which nothing extant approaches ; but the whole museum is so rich in excellence of every kind, and so prodigiously great in extent, that it would be in vain to attempt naming any other particular objects ; for of necessity so many equally worthy of attention must be left unnamed, that such a defective notice would lead more to error than truth.

His excellence Count Maurice de Dietrichstein, under whose learned direction this invaluable treasure is placed, told me that it was in contemplation to publish a description of the whole collection, accompanied with accurate engravings ; the doing so would be making a noble present to the antiquaries of Europe, but it must be a work of great time and enormous expense.

* * * *

The Princess O * * *, in addition to many amiable acts of the same kind, has taken us with her to an establishment of *Sœurs Grises*, for the purpose of witnessing the profession of three young women, who were about to devote themselves to this divinely charitable vocation. The convent is situated about a mile from the town, and at nine o'clock in the morning we were at its gate.

In front of the altar of the little convent chapel in which the ceremony was performed, but outside the altar-rail, was placed a prie-Dieu of sufficient extent to accommodate three kneelers ; and to a seat immediately behind this the princess, my daughter, and myself, were led by the mother of the convent, so

that we had an uninterrupted view of the ceremonies. Nothing could be more simple and less mystical than the manner in which these were performed. The profession is not of necessity for life, though it rarely, or rather never, happens that those who have chosen this path of life abandon it; nevertheless, the knowledge that, should their courage fail them at any period, the continuance of their severe self-imposed duties will be enforced by no authority save that of their own righteous spirits, removes from the act of profession much of that gloomy hopelessness which seems, at least to heretic eyes, to cling to the eternal veil that falls over them.

The inestimable value to their fellow-creatures, too, of the painful offices to which these young girls were about to devote themselves, and which can be as deeply felt and valued by Protestants as Catholics, produced a feeling of interest for the devotées very unlike anything inspired by the vague exaltation of spirit which leads an animated creature, redolent of all the emotions created by young existence, to crush every human affection, and throw herself into the arms of a living death.

The *Sœurs Grises* form one of the orders of the Sisters of Charity, whose vocation is known and honoured throughout the world; and no difference of doctrine, no varieties of creed, are strong enough to lessen the admiration inspired by the devotedness

with which they are seen to fulfil their vows in every land happy enough to have them within its precincts. It was, therefore, with interest unminged with pain, but having much of reverence, that we saw the three young girls dressed in white, and with wreaths of flowers on their heads, approach and take their places on the *prie-Dieu* before us. The venerable, mild-featured prelate of the establishment, having assumed his episcopal robes before the altar, performed mass. The black habits of the novices were placed beside him, and I presume, therefore, that they were consecrated by some of the prayers which made part of the service. The mother retired as soon as this was over, accompanied by the three novices, and followed by three sisters carrying their dresses. During their absence, which was not long, a hymn was sung ; and, when the party returned, the three modest-looking heroines of the day were clad in the neat close uniform of the order. They then placed themselves in chairs prepared for them in front of the prelate, who was also seated before the altar ; and he addressed them in an extemporaneous harangue, in which he most earnestly exhorted them to fulfil worthily the holy duties to which they had vowed themselves. His manner, which was equally affectionate and solemn, drew tears from many. After this, the newly-professed devotees communicated ; in which solemnity they were joined by many of their relatives and friends, who came forward from

among the congregation for the purpose. Many tears were shed, but none by the young girls themselves.

As we left the chapel, the prelate, who had preceded us, and already divested himself of his episcopal dress, welcomed the princess with great cordiality, and at her request proceeded to show us every part of the establishment. Chiefly for the purpose of instructing the young members in the duties to be performed by nurses in a sick chamber, a small hospital, receiving, if I mistake not, about twenty patients, makes part of the convent. It appears that the sisters are instructed in the nature, preparation, and use of drugs, and in all that essential portion of the healing art that chiefly depends upon the gentle, patient, watchful care of ministering females for its efficacy.

In passing through one of the neat dormitories occupied by the sisters, I observed to the prelate that they had the air of great comfort. "When not employed in the duties of their profession," he replied, "the sisters have no great severity of discipline to endure ; but . . . the profession itself is a very arduous one, and often exposes those devoted to it to a greater degree of fatigue, danger, and suffering, than any one can guess who does not witness it. In truth," he added, "there is but one source for the strength that enables them to endure it . . . our faith teaches us to believe that those who die in performance of the duties required by attendance

upon the sick are exempted from the pains of purgatory, and pass to heaven from the bed of death. Without this conviction, which is ever present with them, it would be impossible for them to sustain, as they do, the suffering both of body and mind to which they are exposed. Their firmness and resolution are often very extraordinary."

* * * * *

29th.

Introduced by Baron Hammer-Pungstall, I have just paid a visit to the Armenian convent, or rather what is to be the Armenian convent, for at present masons "possess it wholly." It will, however, when completed, be a very splendid establishment, and has some features in its arrangements which distinguish it from all other convents. Monks have often been called drones, and perhaps not unaptly, but in the Armenian establishment at Vienna no appellation could be less *à-propos* to their mode of life. Within the walls of the convent is already carried on, unfinished as are the rest of the buildings, a very considerable printing concern, in which works in all languages, but particularly the Eastern and Latin, are put out of hand in very superior style.

I have seen convents before, and I have seen printing-presses, but the union was new and interesting. The superb-looking archbishop—six feet some inches in height, and with a beard reaching very nearly to the "skirts of his clothing,"—accompanied us over the whole of the edifice, finished and

unfinished. He is a noble and most distinguished-looking personage, speaking a little French and more Italian, but conversing freely in all sorts of Oriental dialects with the accomplished friend who introduced us. The history of this Armenian society is singular. They have, for some years, had a convent at Closter Neuberg, not far from the well-known Benedictine monastery that looks so finely down upon the Danube there; but they were very poor, and the spirit of industry among them, which now seems to be kept up from taste, was long a matter of necessity. Recently, however, the condition of their finances has undergone a great change. A religionist of their sect having acquired a vast fortune in the East Indies, bequeathed the whole of it to the Armenian convent here; and it is upon these funds that they are now converting what was a very humble dwelling into a very stately convent. The spirit of enterprise, the active industry, and the great learning of the venerable archbishop, gives an extraordinary degree of interest to such a visit as I have just paid; and, should I ever have the happiness of revisiting Vienna, I shall hope to repeat it.

LETTER LXVI.

Closter Neuberg. — Dinner with the Abbot. — Birthday Vienna Ball at the French Ambassador's. — May-day. — The Race. — Review of the Troops. — The Augarten. — The Prater. — The Beauties of Vienna. — Album of the Princess Metternich. — Album of the Princess Odescalchi.

May 2d, 1837.

ON Sunday last I was gratified in a wish, long formed, of passing a day at Closter Neuberg. Our excellent friend, Baron S—, had first put the fancy in my head by his description of the beauty of the spot, the splendour of the convent, and the amiable reception accorded to strangers by the abbot. Several months ago he arranged for us an excursion thither, but circumstances prevented its taking place; and now, when the nearness of our departure had made me give up all hopes of it, he came to tell us that everything for the gratification of our wishes had been settled anew, and that we were to dine with his friend the abbot on Sunday last.

The weather that has followed our long lingering winter has lately been beautiful enough to make us unsay all the uncivil speeches we have been making about the climate. Sunday was a day in which spring and summer seemed blended together; and it was difficult to believe that, exactly one month before, the ground was covered with snow, and sleighs gliding along the Prater.

The road to Closter Neuberg runs near the Danube the whole way, and a very pretty road it is; but it does not prepare one for the exceeding beauty of the spot on which the convent stands. The noble suite of almost princely receiving-rooms look down upon the broad river, and the scenery beyond it, in most commanding style.

Our reception from the amiable father abbot was the very perfection of kindness and hospitality. The morning was spent in showing us such parts of the extensive building as ladies could be admitted to see, and all the magnificent additions making to it. When completed, it will be a palace worthy of the Pope himself. We afterwards sat for a delightful half-hour in the brilliantly decorated chapel, listening to one of the finest organs in the world; and then whiled away the short interval that remained before we were summoned to dinner in as lively and agreeable conversation as any drawing-room could furnish. The party consisted chiefly of the senior members of the community; but another dignitary of the church was also present, who was

introduced to me, if I remember rightly, as the Bishop of Linz.

The entertainment was extremely elegant, the champagne of first-rate excellence, and the conversation extremely animated and pleasant. In short, our day at Closter Neuberg will ever be remembered as one of the red-lettered fêtes of our Vienna calendar. While taking our coffee after dinner, the abbot gratified us by showing his fine collection of coins and medals, on which subject he has great savoir. And so ended our delightful day, or at least the Closter Neuberg part of it,—for our cool delicious drive home was only the preparation for another fête. The birthday of the French king was celebrated that night at the mansion of his ambassador, the Count de St. Aulaire, by a magnificent ball. I confess that I was so completely tired by the fatigue (pleasurable as it was) of the past day, that I felt greatly inclined to sink upon one of the soft couches in that prettiest of galleries that runs along the whole length of the ball-room, and to gaze at the bright scene on which its elegant arches open, till Strauss and the waltzers between them had put me to sleep.

I remembered, however, that this was the last time I should see the réunion of the brilliant society, and looked at it as I thought of this with equal admiration and regret. But, altogether, it was a sad sort of ball to me, for nearly every word I uttered was a farewell to some agreeable person

whom it was very likely I should never see again! Nothing is more evenly balanced than the pleasure of making agreeable acquaintance, and the pain of losing sight of them again. Perhaps, very wise people would never make any acquaintance at all, and so make all their exits and entrances without either sorrow or joy; but, if this be wisdom, I shall never profit by it.

Yesterday was the May-day we have been looking forward to as the occasion that was to show us Vienna out of doors. Nor were we disappointed; for, though we had neither May-pole nor chimney-sweepers, it was by far the gayest May-day I remember.

The merry-makings begin by an exhibition in which the female part of the population take no share: some dozen young men—grooms, if I mistake not, of some of the sporting gentlemen here,—run a race in the Prater soon after the rising of the sun; and I, who always rise soon after him, took my first glance of May-day at Vienna, when drawn to the window by the clatter of the returning multitude that thronged the streets in their way home after witnessing the race. I was told that all the most distinguished young men at present in town had been on the ground, and the prize was strained for with great spirit and activity. The value of it, be it great or small, is given by these “*coureurs des seigneurs*,” as they are called, to the poor.

The spectacle next in order was a review of all the

troops in the garrison by the Emperor. The pretty Glacis was the scene of this gay military display, and nowhere can a spectacle of the kind be seen to greater advantage than from the lofty ramparts which overlook it. The Archduke Albert told me of this review at the birthday ball at the French ambassador's, or we should have missed altogether the only thing of the kind that has been within our reach since we entered Austria. Like everything else that Vienna has shown us, it was *bien monté*, brilliant, and of the *highest finish*, but not on a very extensive scale. For the uniforms and trappings, it was quite a little "champ du drap d'or;" and few men look so well on horseback as the nobles of this most picturesque and chivalric empire. The young archduke rides in the field as the son of his father should ride, and in short the whole thing made a beautiful picture.

At mid-day every carriage in Vienna was en route for the Augarten, and the grand alley of that magnificent garden soon became crowded with all the fine folks in the town. Such perfection of walking toilets I certainly never saw anywhere; nor, except in England, would it be possible, I believe, to find congregated such a multitude of beautiful women. The great ball-room of the coffee-house, placed at the entrance of the gardens, was filled with little tables, at which parties extremely elegant in their appearance were taking ices; and the space opening upon the walks immediately behind the building was

thickly studded with al fresco preparations of the same kind, all of which were incessantly occupied by a succession of well-dressed people. After walking up and down this ever-varying show, till we felt that it would be rather refreshing to get into the carriage again, we left the garden still very brilliant, though beginning to fade a little, and returned home for dinner, and an interval of repose. The very gay folks, however,—at least some of them,—take their dinner on this day without tasting the repose of home. In the Prater, whereto the whole city addresses itself in the afternoon, are a vast number of gay-looking coffee-houses and guinguettes, which throughout every evening of summer are thronged with company, and on the first of May receive among their guests no inconsiderable portion of *la crème de la crème*, who dine there. The Princess L—— having told me some days before, that, in order to see the whole thing completely, we ought to dine there, the gentlemen of the party with whom we had agreed to pass this wandering day, went in the course of the preceding week to bespeak a table and dinner at what they were told was the most distinguished of these suburban places of resort; they were informed, however, upon applying there, that, though they could be supplied with a table and wine, they must send their own dinner, and their own servants to prepare it, which was the mode in which all the repasts taken there on that day were furnished. As all this trouble and fuss was quite out of the question for

us, we contented ourselves by driving to the Prater at five o'clock, and there enjoyed a spectacle infinitely more animated than Hyde Park, though, on the whole, less generally splendid as to the equipages than may be sometimes seen there; and, on a larger scale, more resembling Longchamps in its gay air de fête, than any day of the year can show us among the aristocracy of London. In the more distant part of this beautiful and magnificent enclosure are numerous guinguettes, to which thousands and tens of thousands of the populace resort, the gay chorus of whose laughing voices often reached us when the slow movement of the long line of which we made part settled into decided rest; an occurrence by no means unfrequent.

Not even the most fortunate opera of the best London season could show specimens of more splendid beauty than this slow movement enabled us to look at, and criticise, on the first of May. The reigning Princess Liechtenstein, whose health, as well as the mourning for the late prince, have prevented her from being visible in society during the winter, appeared here with a perfection of majestic loveliness rarely equalled. The first time I saw this beautiful woman, was at an evening party after the carnival ended, and I never remember being so struck by the effect of living loveliness. The other reigning beauties of Vienna are most of them at present rather little women; but this lady is tall, dark-browed, and majestic, and showed among the

fair circle like Juno in the midst of the goddesses and Graces that make up the court of the Pantheon. The next time I had the privilege of looking at her was at the French ambassador's last ball, when the Count de * * * had the good-nature to give me his arm and lead me round her, as near as politeness would permit, that I might indulge the admiration which he by no means seemed to think unreasonable.

Yesterday, for the first time, I saw her submitted to the test of daylight; and, spite of her dark complexion, she bore it well. She is, in short, a superbly handsome personage.

There are not many pretty things in which Vienna is deficient, but I can mention one. It is not possible here, as with us, to enter a printshop and obtain an excellent portrait of any lady of distinction whose countenance has particularly captivated your fancy. This deficiency probably arises from one of the most prominent national characteristics, namely, the inaptitude of puffing and publishing themselves in any way: but I confess, I regret that I cannot carry away with me a select portfolio of female heads; I would have the Wasa, the Liechtenstein, the Metternich, the Schwarzenberg, the Esterhazy, the Hardenberg, etc. etc. etc., making the most charming little album in the world. By the by, though it takes me rather suddenly away from the Prater, I must not omit to mention to you a splendid specimen of the very best species of album

ever invented ; and which, if it could pass into an English fashion, would prove an invaluable blessing to all the ladies and gentlemen among us, whose habit it is to press round a motley-covered loo-table in the hope of finding materials for talking. The merit of the invention belongs, I believe, solely to the Princess Metternich : on one of the uncountable tables of her long suite of drawing-rooms may be found two well-bound volumes, not quite, however, at the service of the *premier venu*, for each has a little lock, requiring a little key ; but when this is obtained, the favoured examiner, instead of poems of four lines requiring a commentary of twenty, sketches of village churches resembling each other as if they had been cast like Birmingham buttons in one mould, and flowers be-spotted with colour-box-born dew, find themselves in company with all the most distinguished gentlemen of Vienna. Whenever the princess desires any particular addition to her collection, the flattering wish is uttered to the honoured individual ; and Daffinger, one of the most celebrated artists in Vienna, is immediately set to work to make a water-coloured drawing of his features. For the most part, these little portraits are admirable likenesses, and form altogether a most interesting collection ; the more so, as in the comparatively small circle of Vienna every face of the permitted set is sure to be known to the rest. The having been invited to become one of this goodly company I consider as a great honour ; and the more

so, perhaps, because mine is the first female head that has been admitted into it.

A sister of the Princess Metternich (the Princess Odescalchi) has also a unique album, which, though perhaps not of such general interest, is one which I consider of great value. In a rich vellum volume this lady has collected the arms, emblazoned in the richest style, of nearly all the sovereigns in Europe, each one *illustrated* by the royal autograph of the monarch of the day when they were done. In addition to these royal 'scutcheons, the autograph signatures to which were all granted as personal favours to herself, the Princess O—— has brought together in the same style the shields of all the noblest houses of Austria, Hungary, and Bohemia, each with the signature of its chief, and forming altogether as novel, elegant, and aristocratic a bijou as can well be imagined.

This album episode has so completely taken me away from the Prater, that it is rather difficult to get back to it again. But I did intend to tell you that the Princess Esterhazy's equipage, with her satin-jerkined boys, was the most strikingly elegant on the course that the young archdukes honoured the ride by their presence on horseback that the *chasseurs* of sundry Jews made as great a show as those of the best-appointed Christians; and that, large as was the multitude assembled on this occasion, neither rout, riot, émeute, or revolution, followed.

LETTER LXVII.

Party at Prince Wasa's. — Grand-duchess Stephanie. — Arch-duchess Sophia. — Archduke Francis. — Anecdote of the late Emperor. — Farewell Walk on the Ramparts. — Exhibition of Flowers. — Farewell Visits.

Vienna, May 3rd, 1837.

LAST night, being the last but one that we shall pass in Vienna, was occupied by a visit that afforded me singular gratification ; inasmuch as it placed me in a most agreeable manner in the presence of one or two persons whom I greatly wished to approach. I have, hitherto, been vexatiously disappointed in my wish to be presented to the Prince and Princess Wasa. On one occasion, when this honour was arranged for me, I was too ill to leave my room ; and their close mourning for the death of the ex-King of Sweden prevented it for some time afterwards. Last week, however, I had the pleasure of receiving a message from her royal highness, through the kind friend to whom we have owed so many of our Vienna pleasures, appointing an hour for us to be presented to her.

This interview took place ; and, like all the rest of the world, we left her enchanted by her beauty, grace, and graciousness. A day or two after this we received an invitation to pass the evening of yesterday with her, with an intimation that her royal highness's mother, the Dowager Grand-duchess Stephanie, of Baden, was at her house ; a circumstance that rendered the invitation doubly agreeable.

On our reaching the head of the staircase a chamberlain met us, and led us through a suite of apartments, in one of which there was company, to a room at the end of them, where a small party was assembled ; and where, by our having been detained by an unlucky accident, we had been expected, as I afterwards learnt, for nearly an hour.

On entering the room I immediately recognised the Archduke Francis, the Duke of Lucca, the Prince and Princess Metternich, the Countess de Zichy Ferraris, the Princess Odescalchi, the Countess Werbna, and one or two other guests. On a sofa sat two ladies, neither of whom I recollected to have seen before ; and, from the place this sofa occupied in the circle, I felt sure that one of them was the Grand-duchess Stephanie. The Princess Wasa came forward to meet me ; and, taking my hand, said, " I must present you to my mother." While she spoke, one of the two ladies on the sofa rose, and approached us. She was a graceful commanding personage,

with a countenance full of intellect and animation, and a manner in which dignity and kindness were most happily blended. She took my hand, and addressed me in a very flattering manner; but the Princess Wasa did not name her, nor did I at all recognise that noble countenance, though I knew it was not the Grand-duchess Stephanie, with whose features the multiplied portraits of her have long ago made me familiar. In short, she resumed her seat without my having the least notion who it was who had thus honoured me.

The Princess Wasa then led me round a table to the other side of the sofa, and did me the honour of presenting me to her still very beautiful mother, who placed me in a chair next to herself, and who fully justified all I have so often heard of the charm of her person, manner, and conversation. The illustrious lady who shared the sofa with her for such I felt persuaded she was, though her style and title were still unknown to me joined in the conversation; and my curiosity as to who she might be was really lost sight of in my genuine admiration of what she was, when the Grand-duchess Stephanie rose, and took her station at the other side of the table to examine the portfolios of Baron Hügel, the celebrated oriental traveller, who just then entered the room.

The unknown lady took the place thus left, which was close to me, the Archduke Francis at the same time seating himself near me on the other side:

she conversed with great animation, spoke much of the late Emperor, and of the regret all must feel who come to Vienna too late to look upon him, and upon the happiness he shed around him ; and too late to witness that filial fervour of love and honour which surrounded him like a glory, giving light and warmth not to his own existence only, but to his race, his court, and his empire.

I have been so long accustomed to hear the Emperor Francis spoken of with the enthusiasm of affection, that there was nothing surprising to me in hearing it again ; yet there was in the tone and manner in which this lady alluded both to his life and death a familiarity that rather startled me, especially as his son was a party in the conversation. She spoke with such charming fervour, however, that it was impossible any could listen without pleasure.

Among other things she related the following anecdote, which is highly illustrative of the kind temper and unaffected good-nature of Francis the First. The court was at some country residence, the name of which I do not remember, when the Emperor, strolling beside a river that ran near it, reached the spot at which a ferry-boat traversed the stream to a village on its opposite bank. "*Il était avec lui,*" said the fair narrator, indicating the archduke, "*avec son gouverneur.*" While they were still lingering near the spot where the idle boat lay fastened in the absence of the ferryman, a poor woman laden

with baskets arrived there for the purpose of crossing, and testified great vexation at finding that the faithless Charon was not at his post.

“Do you think, master, you could push me across?” said the unconscious purveyor of eggs to the imperial loungee.

“Yes, I do,” he replied; “I think I could do it very well.”

Delighted at the unexpected succour, she quickly deposited herself and her baskets in the boat; the unknown trio followed, and the good woman and her accompaniments were safely landed on the other side.

“Well! thank you kindly!” she exclaimed, on perceiving how successfully the business was performed; “old Hans could not have done it better himself and anyhow you have a right to what I should have paid him;” and, so saying, she presented the copper fee to the Emperor.

“No, thank you I will not take the money,” he replied, “for perhaps you may want it more than I do;” and then, re-entering the little bark, he rowed his two companions back again.

The story was a pretty one, and admirably told, with a mixture of animation and simplicity that was quite delightful.

I asked the archduke if he were old enough, at the time of this little adventure, to remember it.

“Oh, yes!” he replied, “I remember it perfectly. Everything that has occurred to one with such a father is sure to be remembered.”

I then mentioned to him having heard that his young son (the heir presumptive to the throne of Austria after himself) retained a devotedness of affection to the memory of his grandfather, exceedingly remarkable in one so young.

"It is quite true!" exclaimed the unknown lady; "MY SON has still no attachment so strong as that which he bears to the memory of his grandfather.

This phrase enlightened me at once; it was no less a personage than the Archduchess Sophia that I had the honour of conversing with: and no sooner was the fact made manifest than I felt astonished at not having recognised, in a more simple coiffure, the same fine intellectual brow which I had more than once admired when encircled by a coronet of diamonds. But, in truth, nothing could be farther from my thoughts than the honour thus unexpectedly accorded me. This lady is as celebrated for her talents as for her exalted station, and this unlooked-for presentation to her was in every way gratifying to me.

The Grand-duchess Stephanie I conceive to be decidedly the handsomest grandmother extant; when one says "She is a very lovely woman," there is no occasion to add "considering her age," for she is one of the few concerning whom no one, I think, would pause to ask "How old is she?" She talked to me very good-humouredly about the notice of my visit to Mannheim, and said, "*Comme vous avez su*

nous intriguer tous, pour trouver qui était votre petite brunette !”

I observed that I had seen her in a set not very likely to meet her eyes.

“ C’est égal !” she replied, “ nous l’avons cherché par tout.”

* * * * *

This morning, before breakfast, I took my last walk on the noble ramparts ; and, extending this last ramble outside the walls, reached the spot where the Bohemian carters, who have conveyed some hundred loads of their beautiful glass, and various other manufactures, to the fair, have formed their rude camp. Young and old were lying about in the straw, some dozing, others lazily enjoying their pipes ; and all with a rudeness, I might almost say a wildness of attire, that it was startling to see close to such a city as Vienna.

After breakfast we drove to Prince Schwarzenberg’s garden in the Rennwag Vorstadt, for the purpose of seeing the show of flowers of the newly established horticultural society, which were exhibited in the conservatory there. Baron Hügel is president of the society ; and Baron Jacquin, if I mistake not, the secretary. Our distinguished botanical countryman, Mr. Bentham, was requested to adjudge the prizes ; which, I think, must have been a matter of some difficulty, from the great beauty and perfection of many of the specimens.

The Archduke Regnier, who is viceroy of Italy,

and also the vice-reine, with their two young daughters, were among the company present at this beautiful exhibition of flowers. Here again the scale was not large, as compared with what London is accustomed to see at her great horticultural exhibitions ; but the quality was excellent.

After leaving this exhibition, we made several farewell visits ; and this evening, after dining at Prince Metternich's, we are to have the painful pleasure of meeting, at the Countess L.'s, the last of those delightful little committées of which I have before spoken to you, and the admission to which, were my home in Vienna, I should consider as one of the greatest pleasures of my life.

This, then, is the last letter I shall write to you from Vienna. To-morrow, at an early hour, we start for Salzburg ; and so on backward, like a crab, to Munich, Francfort, and the Rhine.

LETTER LXVIII.

Munich Gallery. — Hof Chapel.—Princess Helen. — Rotterdam.—
The Hague.—Royal Collection of Pictures.—Chinese Museum.
—Conclusion.

New Bath Hotel, Rotterdam, 29th May 1837.

TO-MORROW we sail for England! The instant after I had written this phrase I raised my eyes, and beheld one, two, three, four, black sooty cylinders staring me in the face, and giving me the lie direct. No! I shall not sail, I shall never sail again! for having received more than one assurance that, if I show myself in the Western world, I shall be promptly executed by Lynch law, I shall hardly be tempted again by the blue waves of the Atlantic to sail in that direction; so I shall never sail again: but I shall set off to-morrow in a very large Dutch steam-boat for London.

I shall be much too busy when I get among my Hadley roses, which I left in full bloom, and hope to

find in full bud, to be able to tell you any of my homeward adventures ; and, therefore, my last letter shall be written this evening.

After balancing for some time between the quaint attractions of old Nuremberg, and the still unseen picture-gallery of Munich, the latter carried it, and accordingly we reached again that city of new palaces about three weeks ago. And I rejoice to say that not again were we disappointed ; the noble Pinakothec was open to the whole world, and it will not be easy for the whole world to find anything better worth looking at.

The building, both within and without, is magnificent ; and the treasures of art, to the preservation of which it is dedicated, are well worthy their splendid lodging.

It is impossible, in such an enormous collection as this, to enumerate particular pictures after one morning devoted to their examination. “The Last Judgment,” by Rubens, is held to be a treasure beyond all price ; but this is a subject on which I am quite unworthy to give an opinion, as I rarely find myself capable of allowing that the splendour of this master’s works atones for their coarseness.

I was well pleased to learn from the person who accompanied us round the rooms, that the sublime altar-piece of Tintoret, which we had so greatly admired last year at Schleissheim, is to have a place at the Pinakothec, even though it will be necessary

to raise the ceiling of one of the apartments for the purpose of receiving it.

The arrangement of the rooms in this fine museum is admirable, and is of itself one great source of the pleasure enjoyed there. The great and small pictures are divided, to the inexpressible relief of the examiner's eyes; the former being ranged in the stately suite of rooms which occupy the middle section of the building through its whole length, these being lighted from above; and the latter, consisting of a vast number of precious little gems, which would be almost lost did they make part of the collection in the great rooms, are hung in a series of small and comparatively low cabinets, extremely well-lighted by the large windows, which are uniform with those of the rest of the building, and are all so perfectly within reach of the eye that there is not one which may not be satisfactorily examined.

Another of the wonders left unseen at our former visit to Munich was the small, still unfinished chapel, which has been built for the use of the court. It is perfectly unique, and very effective in its peculiar style of glittering splendour; but, to my fancy, the old chapel of King's College, Cambridge, which I quote as the strongest contrast to it that I can remember, is more pleasing to the eye. It is probable, however, that the golden ceiling and other splendid embellishments of this modern chef-d'œuvre would be preferred by many; nor is it, indeed, pos-

sible to enter it without uttering an almost involuntary exclamation of "Oh! how beautiful!" which is likely enough to be followed by reiterated bursts of applause as each particular beauty catches the eye in succession; whereas, in the dim little building I have mentioned at Cambridge, the feeling most likely to be inspired would, I think, in most cases lead to silence.

From Munich we made the best of our way to Francfort, where we remained a few days, and then took boat on the Rhine, along which we had the mortification to steam without a single ray of sunshine to light up the beauty of its banks. At Mayence, where we chanced to pass an idle day before we commenced our river voyage, we had the good luck to fall in with the cortége of the fair Princess Helen, Duchess Elect of Orleans. She dined at the hotel where we were, and we had repeated opportunities of seeing her charming face so near and so uninterruptedly as to permit our passing judgment on it. To my taste, she is very lovely. Her eyes are beautiful, her person tall and extremely elegant; and so much mingled sweetness and intellect in her countenance, as must ensure her, I think, an admiring welcome from our critical neighbours.

At Cologne I rejoiced to see an appearance of activity in the works going on in its unequalled church. We entered it during the performance of

the evening service ; and it seemed to me, organ and all, more glorious than ever. I wonder how often it would be necessary to sit down and contemplate that lofty quire before the astonishment and admiration it inspires would fade ?

We reached Rotterdam tired enough, but without misadventure of any kind ; and, having a couple of days to spare, set off for the Hague.

Despite all that can be said of dikes and frogs, and all other Dutch disparagements, I venture to declare that the Hague is a very handsome city, and very admirably surrounded with agreeable walks and drives. The royal garden, or rather forest, in which is situated a very pretty summer palace whose name I forget, is quite charming.

Had we not so recently quitted the countless treasures of the Munich and Vienna galleries, the royal collection of pictures here would not have appeared small. But, with all the inflated ideas of what a picture gallery ought to be, which we brought with us, we were quite ready to allow the excellence of the collection. The famous Paul Potter picture is sufficient of itself to give dignity to the gallery ; and there are, moreover, many others of great and well-merited celebrity. The museum of Chinese curiosities in the rooms below is not to be equalled anywhere. We drove to her majesty's pretty marine villa, and met a party of very elegant-looking

equestrians, male and female, on our return ; but I suspect the Hague, like all other capitals, has sent forth her nobles and gentles to enjoy the pleasures of the woods and fields, for we saw no gay equipages in the streets.

* * * * *

Hadley, June 10th, 1837.

And now, having, got safely home again, I have been endeavouring to recall all the most powerful impressions that have been made upon my mind during my absence, and cautiously to challenge the correctness of them. I do not fear that you should doubt the sincerity of my opinions, but I think it very likely you may question their correctness. I know perfectly well, indeed, that a vast majority of those who have had no opportunity of forming a judgment for themselves, would greatly prefer retaining the false impressions that have been long industriously spread abroad respecting Austria, to adopting any truth, however honestly put before them, that should controvert them. My only consolation under this discouraging conviction is, the recollection of the strong words that have been launched against some former statements of mine, which did not accord with pre-conceived notions, and the very satisfactory manner in which these statements have gradually been admitted to be true.

It has been with a most honest purpose of speaking truly, that I have sketched the foregoing account of what I remarked in Austria ; but lest, in the warmth of approbation of what I felt to be excellent, I should have appeared to set the theory of the Austrian government above that of England, or said anything that may be construed into an opinion that our popular institutions are not calculated to be beneficial to us, I shall endeavour to explain what I have meant by saying, that “ what is good for Austria would not be good for us.”

I may, too, quote a great name in support of this opinion ; Prince Metternich has repeatedly expressed to me, with all the strength and clearness of his adamantine intellect, that *any revolution* tending to change the spirit of our constitution would be equally destructive to the happiness and prosperity of Great Britain. “ I am a Catholic,” said he to me on one occasion, “ and I trust a good one, yet did I deeply deplore your emancipation bill ; for I saw that it must tend to loosen and shake the foundation upon which your well-trying and justly approved constitution was founded.”

When I have said that the result of the absolutism of Austria was a state of general well-being and contentment, I have said what is most strictly true ; but it would be equally unlogical and unjust to infer from this, that I conceive it would be better that England should be governed by the same system.

Not only are we by national character or habits unfit for this, but the numerical division of the different classes of society among us would render what is just and generous in Austria, oppressive and unjust in England.

Before this can be properly understood, however, there is one broad, fundamental truth to be admitted, which I know never finds place in the speculations of those who prate of the tyranny of an absolute government, and of the freedom of such as are representative. This neglected truth may be plainly stated thus: in an absolute government, like that of Austria, the pressure of the laws and regulations that keep the machine in order, falls upon the upper classes; while in a representative government, like that of Great Britain, this pressure falls upon the lower. That the fact is so, will probably only be allowed by those who have watched the effects of the laws in both countries.

Were Great Britain divided, as the Austrian states are, into a small class of nobles and a large class of plebeians, I should not have the smallest doubt that if a simple absolutism could be introduced, the majority would be greatly benefited. But with us the proportions are totally different, and so would be the result of such an innovation. In fact, no such class as that of the nobility of Austria and her dependencies exists among us at all; and the checks and restraints which there fall upon (comparatively

speaking) a few, to whom the evil is atoned for, perhaps, by their privileges and the exclusive dignity that attaches to them, would, with us, cripple and confine the intellect and the energies of the vast majority, around whom no insurmountable barrier exists that excludes them from any rank their hopes may aim at, short of the throne itself.

Such speculations as these, upon contingencies morally impossible, would be worse than idle, were it not that they tend to expose the political cant which leads so many blindfold. If those who advocate the utmost extent of representative power, would honestly avow that they are struggling to increase their chance of clutching a portion of that power; unmindful of the evils that do, and must inevitably fall upon the small remnant left to be governed by these hordes of legislators, the mischief would soon remedy itself; but when the condition of the working classes is made the watch-word of these factious demagogues, who, after they have split a tenement into fractions to multiply the "most sweet voices" that shall make them senators, care no more for the thick-packed hive than for the crawling reptiles of their dunghills, it is well to turn the eyes of those who listen to them to the other extremity of the political chain, that they may see what the proportion of comfort enjoyed by the labouring poor is in a country where they have one ruler instead of five hundred, and where Providence

settles who that ruler shall be, instead of a drunken mob.

It would by no means be difficult to show, on the other hand, that the operation of an absolute government upon the higher classes tends greatly to amerce their privileges, and to render altogether null and void all that political power and influence which wealth and station inevitably give under a representative constitution. That this is an evil to the higher classes, cannot be denied; and there is another, also, of more general importance, and the effect of which must be perceptible to every enlightened Englishman. Let the education of the higher classes, under an absolute government, be as carefully attended to as it may, the spur is wanting which makes so many high-bred young Britons endure the toil of study, as resolutely as if their daily bread were to depend upon it. An English youth, if he reads in the history of his country that some noble ancestor kept an admiring senate hanging on his words, is likely enough to run lustily in the course that may lead him to the same goal; while those who can only hear of their forefathers' renown from the record of his country's battles, must, in the piping days of peace, be totally without any such awakening impulse.

And again :—the sort of precaution taken by the truly paternal Austrian government, that no elevation of rank shall license the doing anything that

may by its consequences endanger the tranquillity of the people, reminds me of the care a tender mother takes that her great boys shall not get into the nursery, and set the little ones at mischief.

I need not repeat here how highly I estimate the advantages arising from a censorship of the press ; but the censorship I would advocate should have no operation beyond that of preventing the abuse of a power, the proper use of which is the noblest privilege the mind of man can conceive. In Austria its operation does go farther, and the effect of this is decidedly perceptible on the intellectual aspect of the country ; though some there certainly are who seem above the reach of it. These, however, shine too much “ like bright particular stars,” to be fairly considered as specimens of the whole ; and, in short, I think, it cannot be denied that, happy as is the state of good order and contentment in which this country remains in the midst of such troubled scenes as other parts of the world exhibit, the advantage has not been obtained, and cannot be preserved, without some sacrifices ; BUT THESE ARE ALL AT THE EXPENSE OF THE HIGH, AND NOT OF THE LOW. Thus, while the ship is saved from the danger of storms and tempest, the sails aloft flap idly and unprofitably in the motionless air ; and the vessel, beautifully trimmed as she is, suffers lesser craft to get ahead of her.

A question, therefore, may fairly arise as to the comparative value of what is to be gained, and what is to be lost, by popular power; and though it may be a question improper to discuss in Austria, where the decision has already been made, it is otherwise in England, and furnishes a fair ground for investigation and argument. But it is extended, complicated, and important beyond what it is possible, as I imagine, for any but a practical statesman to conceive; and the worst feature of our present condition is, the popular belief that the greater numerical amount of persons profoundly ignorant, who can be set to decide it, the wiser the decision will be.

For my own part, as I neither till the ground, spin cotton, nor forge iron, it would be a matter of great difficulty with me to give my vote in favour of any change that should throw all advantages to the side of the operatives, at the expense of the idle part of the community; but then I have at least the honesty to say so, and do not seek to advocate the system most agreeable to myself, by pretending that it is wholly and solely from my love and affection to the poor souls, who are the only sufferers by it.

AU RESTE: however much I may prefer the English state of things for the pampered English aristocrats, I can still admire, love, and reverence the mild paternal sway of Austria, which has never

suffered the poor man's quiet to be endangered, that a rich one may gain either profit or renown thereby ; and with all sincerity of heart I can offer homage to those who have immovably fixed their eyes on the real source of their country's happiness, and passed their lives in endeavouring to preserve it.

THE END.

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